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Winter  
2018

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Mouth of  
The River

Publication of Oyster  
River High School





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Dear Readers,

As we set sail in 2018 and reach the midway point of our school year, Mouth of the River's nineteen-student staff is pleased to show you our second quarterly issue. As a team, we look to do our very best to both individually and collectively use our publication to present our readers with powerful, informative and detailed stories. We believe that our hard work throughout the past few months on this issue showcases the depth of our writing and our attention to detail on the layout that surrounds it.

While working on every issue, we strive to create a publication with a diverse range of stories, and we believe that this quarter's installment has that. From profiles on Oyster River students, Nate Sullivan and Olivia Lenk, to opinion-editorials on phone dependency and concussions, to in-depth looks at competency based grading and local immigration issues, we are proud to present our readers with this variety of topics.

Along with the work we have done in developing our magazine, we continue to have extensive content on our website, [mor.news](http://mor.news). Our website allows us to share different forms of material with our readers through photojournalism, audio, and video stories. Additionally, our bi-weekly podcast, 'Voice of the River,' can be found there as well!

Our staff thanks you for picking up a copy of our Issue 2 magazine, and whether it be read in the frigid snow or by the warmth of your heater, we hope you enjoy!

Sincerely,

Anna Kate Munsey, Skylar Hamilton, and Zach Leichtman  
Co Editors-in-Chief

**Website:** <https://mor.news/>

**Twitter:** @MORMagazine

**Instagram:** @mormagazine

**Facebook:** @MouthOfTheRiver





Maise Cook  
Print Manager



Hannah Croasdale  
Events Coordinator



Felicia Drysdale  
Subscriptions  
Manager



Nick Dundorf  
Op-Ed Editor



Sophie Graff  
Content Manager



Skye Hamilton  
Co-Editor in Chief



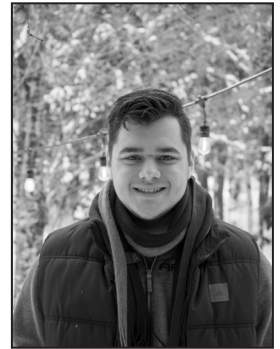
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Manager



Zach Leichtman  
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Layout Editor



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Distribution  
Manager



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Sports & Culture  
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Website Manager



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Jess Speechley  
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Eleanor Zwart  
News Editor



# New Hampshire's Indonesian Community

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## From Religious Persecution -to- Threats of Deportation

### Our Indonesian Neighbors

Immigration issues often seem distant in New Hampshire, reserved for our Southern border or designated refugee communities across the country. While media coverage is extensive, it often neglects the small, local stories. A community of Indonesian immigrants have built their lives right here in Southern New Hampshire. As neighbors, coworkers, and schoolmates, they have existed in the fabric of our community for nearly two decades. Many have received asylum for persecution in their home country and become residents or citizens. Many, too, have lived as undocumented immigrants, unable to acquire the same status. As political lines have shifted in the past year, government arrests have increased on undocumented immigrants. Today, their future is uncertain.

### A History of Persecution



Indonesia's 1998 race riots targeted Chinese and Christian Indonesians (Artwork by Audrey Ammann)

"I went to a Christian school. At one point my school was attacked by this ocean of people. I was able to escape, barely... My friend got stabbed."

"They were having a service when a group of people came into the church telling them 'hey, you guys have to stop this service or we are going to start beating people up.' They had weapons with them," Timothy Sombah recounts the persecution his parents experienced in Indonesia. At the turn of the millennium, he and his people faced violence due to their religion and ethnicity. He was born to Indonesian parents who practiced Christianity. Through the 90's, the Sombahs faced rising tension in their home country, which has the largest Muslim population in the world, as a financial crisis pitted the Muslim majority against the comparatively small Chinese and Christian populations.

The LA Times wrote in their article "In Indonesia, 1998 Violence Against Ethnic Chinese Remains Unaddressed" in 2010, "in May 1998, during two deadly days of racially fueled mayhem, rioters killed 1,000 people and raped 87 women, most of Chinese descent. Others cowered in their homes as the rape squads, reportedly led

by army thugs, roamed the streets of Jakarta, the Indonesian capital." The violence was rampant, encouraged by financial crisis and the country's authoritarian government.

Though the May Riots triggered the end of the dictatorship of President Suharto, the ruler had long exploited deep ethnic and religious divides to control the country. As BBC wrote in their article "Rise and Fall of Strongman Suharto" in 2000, "President Suharto consistently played on people's anxieties about social unrest, separatism and religious extremism to maintain his own grip on power." Suharto's thirty year rule had left up to one million alleged "communists" dead, leaving a precedent of divisive political violence in the populous nation.

The riots marked a turning point in Indonesia's political history, but at the cost of extreme violence against the Chinese minority.

Sombah further describes his personal experiences during the tumultuous era. "I went to a Christian school. At one point my school was attacked by this ocean of people. I was able to escape, barely... My friend got stabbed. My cousin got hit in the head with a big log... I was in middle school." With this rash of violence, much of which extended beyond the 1998 riots, many families sought refuge outside the country. Fearing their safety, Sombah and his parents made their way to the United States.



## A New Start?

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The Sombahs' plane landed in the U.S. in 2003 and they made their way to Somersworth, New Hampshire. Timothy Sombah was 15, and his family had spent months translating legal documentation in order to begin the task of emigrating to the U.S. They had arrived on a tourist visa, but immediately sought asylum status. The process is lengthy, often involving multiple federal departments and numerous court proceedings. The Sombahs pressed hard for years, putting what money they had toward lawyers and application fees. Ultimately, their request was denied, but the family remains.

As the Sombahs struggled against legal barriers, other Indonesian asylum seekers have had greater success.

"I'm fortunate enough to be a citizen of the United States and to have gone through the natural judicial process as a result of being granted amnesty," says Eden Suoth, a senior at UNH and Chinese-Indonesian immigrant. Suoth, who is majoring in both Philosophy and Math, became a U.S. Citizen at the age of 19. His family had fled as well, but managed to be granted asylum in the following years.

Why did the two families have such different experiences with the asylum process? For the Sombahs, the courts felt that they did not have enough evidence to prove that they were persecuted—an element necessary to being granted asylum. The Sombahs soon found themselves in legal limbo. They spent years trying to appeal the decision, all while remaining in the U.S.

When the Sombahs' case was closed, they were left in a difficult position. They could not work, drive, or do anything else that required legal documentation. This was a common dilemma amongst members of the newly formed Indonesian community in Southern NH. Numerous Chinese Indonesians had fled their homeland, making up the close knit group that resides primarily in Dover, Somersworth, and Manchester, NH. While many were able to receive asylum and even citizenship, another portion of the community found themselves in the same position as the Sombahs.

As Eden Suoth would later put it, those without a green card had only a few options: hide, return to Indonesia, or flee to Canada.

## A Glimpse of Hope

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A fresh opportunity came with an ominous name: Operation Indonesian Surrender (OIS). The program, initiated in 2010, provides undocumented immigrants in New Hampshire with an opportunity to legally work and reside in the state. This comes with a few conditions: immigrants must surrender their passports and provide personal information, they must have no criminal record, and they must check-in regularly with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to review of their case.

While limited, the program provided new hope to many members of the Indonesian community. They no longer had to hide, and could acquire work visas to support their families. The Sombahs were overjoyed—this was a new means for them to stay in the U.S.

In 2012, Timothy Sombah discovered another opportunity. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, is a program initiated by former president Barack Obama to protect undocumented immigrants who came to the US before the age of 16. In their article "US immigration: DACA and Dreamers explained", CNN wrote that "DACA recipients have been able to come out of the shadows and obtain valid driver's licenses, enroll in college and legally secure jobs. They also pay income taxes."

Through the DACA program, Sombah has been able to obtain a higher education. He attended the University of New Hampshire for a couple semesters, before transitioning to Great Bay Community College, where he earned a Certification of Information Technology. Sombah now works as a contractor for Comcast in Exeter.

DACA is important to immigrants across the country, as recipients (often referred to as "The Dreamers") who have grown up in the United States are given a path to higher education, allowing them to become a larger part of the U.S. economy.

## A New Order

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The election of President Trump has brought new turmoil to issues of race and immigration. He has attempted to ban travel from a number of predominantly Muslim countries including, as The Guardian writes in their article "Trump Travel Ban: US Appeals Court Allows Partial Implementation" any "People from Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia and Chad who do not have connections to the United States." President Trump's stance on immigration has also shown itself in his threats to end the DACA program and the federal government's reinvigorated crackdown on undocumented immigrants, showing a 43 percent increase in undocumented immigrant arrests, according to the Chicago Tribune's "Deportations fall under President Trump despite increase in arrests by ICE."

The shift is shocking for many, but for immigrants like Daniel Pontoh, it's nothing new. "The election was upsetting for sure, no one

"From 9/11, there was all this  
anti-brown, anti-immigrant,  
anti-Muslim... all this anti-people of  
color rhetoric. I grew up around that."

was not upset that is on our side, but I can't say that I was very surprised by what happened. I moved here in June, 2001 and then not too many months later, 9/11 happened. From 9/11, there was all this anti-brown, anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim... all this anti-people of color rhetoric. I grew up around that."

Pontoh, an ethnic Indonesian who immigrated to the U.S. from Canada when he was eight years old, has felt the weight of America's recent political shift. He is a passionate environmental activist who has also organized around immigrant rights issues since the election. In the months since, Pontoh has organized a mass phone banking action, where over 100 people called on local mayors and town councilors to pass resolutions in favor of protecting undocumented immigrants from federal officials.

Pontoh asserts that the issue is an all-encompassing one, commenting on recent threats to the DACA program. "What's not talked



“All the eleven million immigrants [in the United States], we want protections for them too. We don’t want it to stop with just DACA people.”

about often enough is that we want everyone to stay. All the eleven million immigrants [in the United States], we want protections for them too. We don’t want it to stop with just DACA people...The whole concept of DACA is because these young immigrant activists and organizers got together, strategized, and organized around Obama to get him to do something.”

The broader Indonesian community has also felt the shift. The check-ins with ICE became more frequent—from a few times a year to once a month. In September, 23 immigrants involved with Operation Indonesian Surrender were slated for deportation. Among them: Timothy Sombah’s parents.

An order came to them from the ICE office in Manchester, NH. They had days to purchase plane tickets to Indonesia. Sombah’s parents were shocked: they had to leave behind their apartment, their jobs, their friends, and their own son. The family was also worried about the conditions they would return to. Indeed, Eden Suoth’s own family cancelled a trip to Indonesia last year after racial tensions in Jakarta boiled over once more.

### An Uncertain Future



The Sombahs celebrate their stay of deportation  
(Artwork by Audrey Ammann)

“It’s easy to abstract these executive orders to the point where empathy and sympathy is difficult. Realize that it is your community members, your friend with whom you’ve grown up who are just trying to live their lives.”

Luckily for the Sombahs, a federal judge in Boston put a stay on their deportation at the last minute to allow further deliberation on their case. The family was overjoyed; Timothy Sombah recalls, “we were just watching TV. I got the news while the hearing was still going on. I jumped at my dad—I pretty much tackled him—I hugged him so tight... My mom came in the room and she was like ‘what’s going on, why are you crying, what did the lawyers say?’ I hugged her and I was like ‘Mom, you’re staying, you guys are staying.’... After that, we prayed together as a family. We gave thanks to God for his miracles.”

The judge has since put a restraining order on ICE. The Sombahs, as well as the Indonesian community, feel relieved with the order, but the future remains unclear. Many other Indonesians in the OIS program are in the process of finding legal aid, for fear of future repercussions.

In the meantime, Timothy Sombah seeks to dispel any misgivings people outside of the Indonesian community might have. “A lot of the misinformation out there is how us immigrants are just cheating the system, that we are on welfare. That’s not the case. Because we don’t have a citizenship, we can’t reap the benefits—and we’re paying taxes. We can’t have any criminal record... that’s one of the qualifications I have to pass... I have to pay the [\$500] application fee every two years.”

He adds, “I can’t even get financial aid. Everything thing that we did, us Dreamers, we paid the school out of our own pocket.”

Suoth concludes his own remarks intentionally. “It’s easy to abstract these executive orders to the point where empathy and sympathy is difficult. Realize that it is your community members, your friend with whom you’ve grown up who are just trying to live their lives.

These aren’t criminals, these aren’t malicious people, they’re really just trying to contribute to the community.” **M**

—Nicholas Dunderf

Editor’s note: At the time of publishing, the Department of Justice has requested that the Supreme Court review a federal judge’s decision to block the Trump administration’s plan to end the DACA program. 700,00 young immigrants are currently enrolled in the DACA program, and Senate Democrats are threatening to vote against this year’s budget if money is not allocated for it. If this year’s budget is not passed, government shutdown is possible, however its effect on the life of DACA is uncertain.



# Competency Based Grading & Education

*What it is, how it works, and why you should care*

Students are used to the familiarity of A's, B's, C's, and even the occasional D's and F's. However, students and teachers may be in for a shock as these standard letter grades could soon be replaced entirely. For nearly one hundred years, the educational model used across the United States has remained the same. Projects, homework, and tests have been primarily structured around set lesson plans, before being graded on a numerical scale and averaged together to determine a final score for a class. But this could soon change completely, as competency-based curriculums and grading systems have slowly become one of the most widely debated topics in the scene of modern education due to the fact that they aim to avoid letter grades in favor of broader, competency requirements.

At the Oyster River Cooperative School District (ORCSD), these changes are becoming more and more apparent, with both the middle and high school considering which system helps to best educate the students. Oyster River Middle School's (ORMS) website defines competencies as "an overarching concept that encompasses multiple learning standards which are interconnected." This definition describes a model which differs from the more widespread and traditional educational system, which is derived from the Committee of Ten model that was originally created in 1892 due to a divide between educators on the role of high school.

The core values behind the Committee of Ten created an in-school environment where students could all learn to practice skills in preparation for college under a set learning model, using high school to prepare students under "the belief that the same subjects would be equally beneficial to both academic and terminal students," according to the University of Notre Dame's online summary of the Committee. While seemingly vague at first glance, this explanation suggests that traditional curriculum is based around a uniform route to a set finish line, and is helpful to all students, regardless of their post-graduation futures.

Within the past decade however, competencies have begun to challenge the thoughts of having set pathways in place to achieve post-graduation goals, arguing for more individualized tracks for students to reach set expectations.

Gabrielle Anderson, who is currently a social studies teacher at Oyster River High School (ORHS), taught for several years at John Stark Regional High School, which uses both competency-based curriculum and grading systems. She explained that, "[Oyster River creates] a situation where students need to be much more accountable for demonstrating and understanding content, as well as the skills that teachers are trying to teach them. I would argue that all teachers in the building are already using this in some form, though they might not call them [competencies]."

At the middle school however, most teachers don't need to speculate on the use of competencies: all classes are already taught through their use. This recent development comes with the exception of the eighth grade classes of: algebra, science, language arts, and social studies, where the teachers of these classes opted to con-

tinue following the school's previous model of traditional grading. This highlights the fact that some professionals have concerns about the methods of competency-based grading and education.

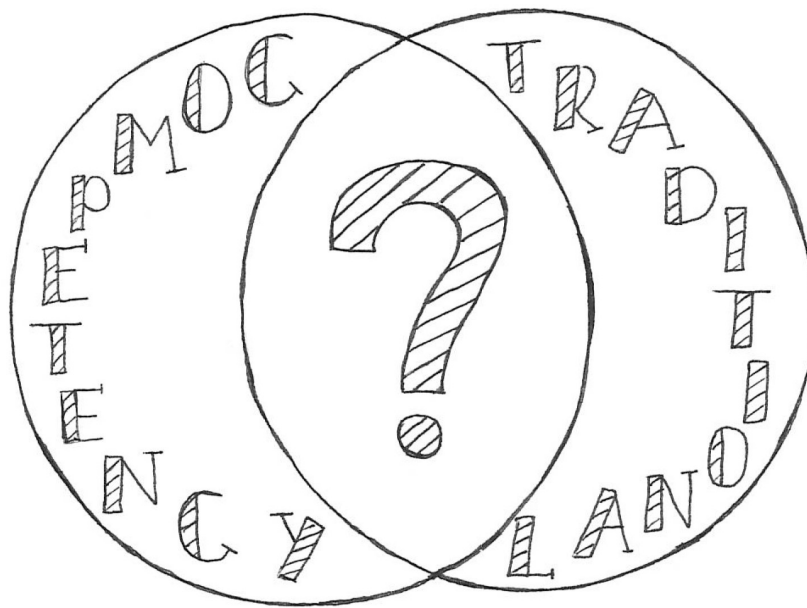
When speaking about this choice to continue using letter grades, ORMS Principal, Jay Richard, noted, "those teachers didn't want to

move away from traditional grades, and wanted to continue to use the 100 point scale. We actually did [an anonymous] vote on this, because the School Board asked me to poll all the teachers in the school. It ended up being forty-seven teachers in favor of moving to a competency-based system, and nine teachers against, so we moved forward."

Though ORMS is now using two different grading methods, core curricula still varies by grade and subject matter. One of the only differences for students and parents is that competency-based grading is now broken

down into four main elements which can be viewed on PowerSchool in the place of letter grades.

The highest category, Meets, is marked with an 'M,' followed by Progressing, Beginning, and Insufficient Evidence, which are each marked with their corresponding letter or letters, respectively.



This form of grading is often accompanied by 'I can' statements, which can be found within many of the district's classrooms. In addition, certain posters hung at the middle school also help to translate learning standards into more student-friendly language on rubrics and overall classroom competency goals.

These 'I can' statements and posters also help to define the four different categories mentioned above. ORMS defines Meets as when "the student has met the goal— high expectations have been met constantly;" Progressing as when "the learning journey is well underway and the goal is in sight;" Beginning as when "the journey has begun with the first steps being taken towards understanding;" and Insufficient Evidence as when "the journey has not begun, most likely due to absences or significant lack of practice." However, students are not the only ones who need classroom translation when it comes to competencies. Valerie Wolfson is a seventh grade social studies teacher at the middle school, who has been a proponent of competency-based education in the district. She explained, "one of the questions that has come up [about competencies] is about the verbiage we use. When you hit Meets, meaning high expectations consistently, that's not a flat level of achievement. That's not a low bar. In my class if you get Meets, then you have met all of the criteria, which is a difficult place to arrive at. Most kids don't get there on the first try."

Other members of the district's educational community agree on the point that language may be distracting from competency's true goals. Andrea Drake, a math teacher at the high school, spoke to this, adding, "by outlining our competencies, I think we've set up a clear road map for students that shows them exactly what they need to master, or at least become proficient in, to be successful in future studies. This information has actually always been around, but it's not necessarily been communicated in a way that makes it understandable to everyone."

In an attempt to make the vocabulary associated with competencies more transparent to parents, the middle school's website about the system outlines several key terms. Alongside these, it also encourages that the true values of competencies lie more within their values and less within their definition.

As further explained on the website, "[competencies] are an approach to instruction that allow for multiple pathways to the same outcome. This differentiation increases student engagement and intrinsic motivation. Students receive meaningful feedback and opportunities to relearn, revise, and reassess."

These are the Three R's in the world of competencies, and aim to further drive forward the notion that "grades should reflect what students learn, not what students earn," which is currently a main motto at ORMS.

Though traditional and competency-based grading often cross paths on the use of these Three R's and formative and summative assessments, differences emerge with what exactly is evaluated to show a student's growth as a learner. A traditional model, such as the Committee of Ten, typically assess homework, class participation, and group dynamics as a part of final grades. Competencies focus more on a unit's final projects or end goals, separately from these participatory reports.

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*"We found that we would have students getting A's, but they still had gaps in parts of their learning. They might do classwork and homework, as well as participate, which might inflate their grade, but not necessarily show understanding."*

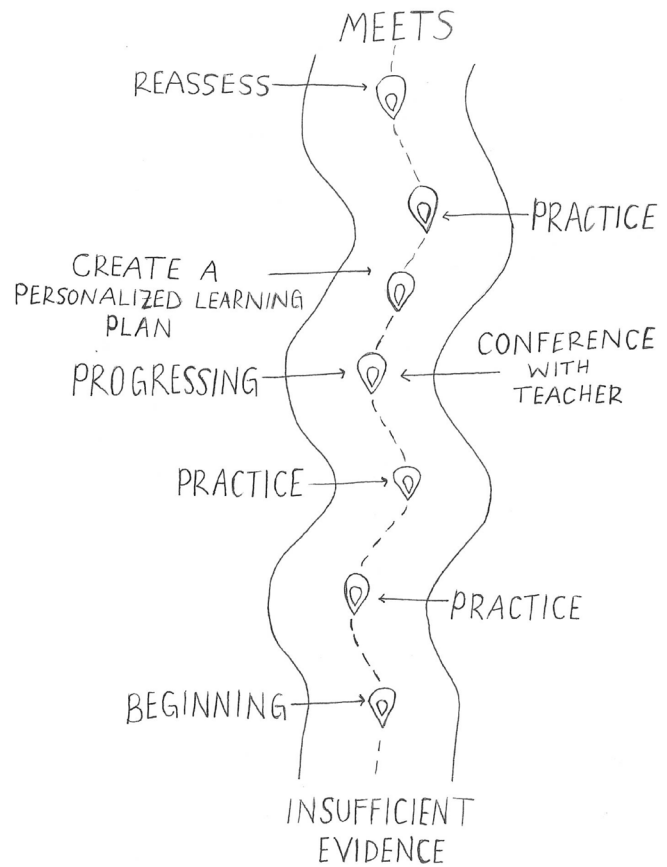


Image adapted from poster by Darlene Smith

"We found that we would have students getting A's, but they still had gaps in parts of their learning. They might do classwork and homework, as well as participate, which might inflate their grade, but not necessarily show understanding," said Richard.

Drake had similar sentiments. "At the end of the day, I might argue that a student who has earned a B+ and a student who has earned a A- have basically the same enduring understanding of the topics in a class, yet the impression we are left with in the traditional system is that the student with an A- is a stronger student. The truth may be that the student with a B+ is just not so reliable when it comes to assessments and as a result, performed a bit worse than the A- student."

While this example of performance-based subjectivity is ideally removed through the collection of M, P, B, and IE's at the middle school, many question their validity at the high school level.

Thomas Newkirk, an Oyster River School Board member and Professor Emeritus from the University of New Hampshire, published a book titled *Holding On to Good Ideas in a Time of Bad Ones*, where he discusses the potential effects of competencies at high schools in a chapter titled "Speaking Out on Competency-Based Education." In this chapter, Newkirk states that, "one could easily imagine a 'pass and move on' mentality in schools if the measure of achievement is competence with no incentive for distinction."

Anna Haight ('19) agreed with the points of Newkirk's chapter, saying, "I think competency-based grading will negatively affect me. It won't give me any incentive to try hard in my classes or do my work to the best of my ability. Then, later in life, I will continue to have the same work habits and attitude, which won't set me up for long term success. I also don't think I would have a true understanding of what my grades were or how I was in doing in a course if I could only see letters on PowerSchool."



When asked directly about his views on the subject of this system of competency-based grading in the high school setting, Newkirk noted, “a reporting system with a mass of M’s, P’s, and B’s may not be as clarifying as people think,” before further stating: “I feel that there needs to be more to an assessment than ‘meeting competency.’ There should be some indication of excellence or distinction.”

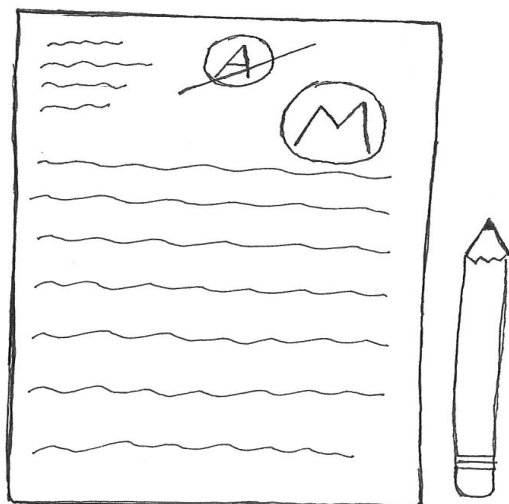
Haight further supported Newkirk’s concerns. “I work really hard in all my classes. If I get an A on a test, I know I was able to understand the presented material. If I get a C on a test, I know that I need to study more and make extra efforts to understand said material. Switching to competencies would mean I just won’t know either of those things anymore.”

Another concern for many high school students is the fear that competencies may affect their admittances to certain colleges. Megan Hutar (‘18) spoke to this, noting, “I think having competency[-based] grading on a high school transcript might harm a student in the college application process. I also think that it might be subjective because a teacher may believe that a student is not ‘competent’ without having quantitative evidence, like a numeric grade on a test, to support that.”

Hutar is certainly not alone. Competencies are not seen as commonly as traditional letter grades, and have more of a tendency to vary from school to school. As explained by Drake, “while we have actually been working with competencies here in New Hampshire for over a decade, because the state did not specifically state how competencies were to look, or what it actually meant to each district in terms of awarding credit and grades, most districts took it on themselves and personalized it. As a result, there is a wide array, and many different philosophical points of view, as to how competency-based grading should take place.”

In an attempt to ease some of these post-graduation concerns about competencies, there are currently numerous nationwide attempts to ensure every student has an equal opportunity to attend college, regardless of the style of their academic transcripts, including a large effort focused here, in New England.

According to, “71 New England Institutions of Higher Education State that Proficiency-Based Diplomas Do Not Disadvantage Applicants,” published by the New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC), “the movement to adopt proficiency-based approaches to teaching, learning, and graduating has gained momentum throughout New England and the country, as more educators, parents, employers, and elected officials recognize that high educational standards and strong academic preparation are essential to success in today’s world.”



*“One of the questions that has come up is about the verbiage we use. When you hit Meets, meaning high expectations consistently, that’s not a flat level of achievement. That’s not a low bar. In my class if you get Meets, then you have met all of the criteria, which is a difficult place to arrive at. Most kids don’t get there on the first try.”*

Schools that have joined this movement, such as Harvard University, Tufts University, Dartmouth College, and even the University of New Hampshire, have all “provided statements and letters stating—unequivocally—that students with proficiency-based grades and transcripts will not be disadvantaged in any way,” according to the article.

So where does all this information leave the high school in terms of choosing how to proceed with or without a competency-based system of grading and curriculum?

“I feel as though if ORHS was to adopt something similar to our reporting model [at the middle school], I would recommend a slow roll-out, with an emphasis on parent communication and education,” suggested Wolfson.

Mark Milliken, an administrator at the high school, added to this, saying, “the point of competencies is to make what students should know and are expected to do more transparent. It brings clarity to subjects, and I would argue that most good teachers are already using elements of this within their classrooms, anyways. I feel like a hybrid model might help encompass this, by combining what people already know with the benefits of competencies.”

However, the potential drawbacks of a hybrid system were touched upon in Newkirk’s article, detailing that to achieve success from flexible learning, “schools will need to move to a ‘blended learning’ model where the teacher will take on more of a coaching and support role, since competency-based education would require a network of options beyond the capability of any teacher to create.”

For the time-being however, students across all levels of the district should not expect to see any immediate changes within the near future. “We first need to become comfortable with competencies in the classroom, students using these competencies, and students demonstrating whether or not they are competent. We need to first understand the intricacies of that before we even start to grade those things,” said Milliken. “As for right now though, I don’t see our high school community getting rid of grades. To me, what makes more sense, is a grading system with some added information around competencies, though I have no idea if, or when, that would happen,” he added.

Though the future of competencies in the Oyster River Cooperative School District is still up in the air, if there is anything for certain it is that the schools will continue their journey forward in pursuing one of their vision statements to “create safe, stimulating learning environments where all students are challenged and excited by the opportunities to learn,” regardless of the means.

Haight agreed with this, stating, “it doesn’t matter if Oyster River chooses to switch to competencies or if it keeps the same grading system, because I know that the staff and faculty are always looking out for our best interests as students. At the end of the day, it’s not about how we are graded but about how much we learn, and that’s what’s really important here.” **M**

-Devan McClain

# Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Free Speech

“If a group of students want to publish something and be provocative and push a subject, something that might be uncomfortable with the school board, the school administration, or what have you, I think it’s within their rights.”

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“Our liberty depends on freedom of the press and that cannot be limited without being lost,” Thomas Jefferson once said. And while he has passed, his sentiment is still relevant today: freedom of the press is one of the best and most influential parts of our nation and should be a right shared by all. That includes student journalists.

Within the past 50 years, limitations of students’ freedom of expression within public school have been tested. In some cases, the court has ruled that students’ First Amendment rights have been violated, while other times, it finds that the school administration is right in censoring their students. We must push to acquire the protection of student freedom of speech, within reason, in the public school system.

A type of state legislation aiming to solve this issue, often referred to as New Voices legislation, has been put in place in five states, and is in progress in sixteen. Unfortunately, New Hampshire currently isn’t on either of those lists. If people come together statewide, this legislation can become a reality in our home state. I’m hoping to make that happen.

Censorship of student publications, without justifiable reason, is a problem that must be fixed. If school administrations are able to pick and choose what will be published in the school newspaper, an inaccurate and incomplete picture of the topics that are controversial and thought-provoking among students will be the result. As of now, student journalists do not have the same rights as professional publications. In hopes of addressing this problem, people nationwide have begun to come together.

Matt Pappas, ORHS Social Studies teacher, has a background in politics and is interested in helping to create New Voices legislation in New Hampshire. He said, “pursuing some sort of a freedom of speech law, freedom of the student press law, intrigues me and I think it might be worth reaching out to some of our legislators and seeing what their opinions are and if they’re willing to pursue this and introduce some legislation to provide that. At least set some standards and hopefully allow school newspapers not just here but all over the state to explore this further.” He went on to say that, “I think this newspaper is here for a purpose, and it’s to teach how to be a journalist. Personally, I think students should have the freedom to print pretty much whatever they want, within reason.” He noted that there were some student privacy issues that have come up in the past, so publications have to be sure that what they’re saying does not single someone out inappropriately, or infringe upon the duty of the school to provide a safe learning environment. However, aside from these privacy issues, Pappas believes that, “if a group of students want to publish something and be provocative and push a subject, something that might be uncomfortable with the school board, the school administration, or what have you, I think it’s within their rights.”

It’s important to note that the purpose of this New Voices legislation is not to allow students to write negatively about specific students or topics that would violate the duty of the school. It’s understandable that the school wants to ensure a positive learning environment for students. I understand the fact that we are a school system, and that there can be some legality or privacy issues with certain stories. Of course, we must respect this. But aside from these special cases, I believe that it is so crucial to find those issue stories, the ones that could open readers’ eyes to something they may have previously been unaware of. Beyond the basics of covering local events and profiling relevant people, I think it is equally important, as the main news source for ORHS, to report on those issues that students face, and adults may be unaware of.

ORHS Dean of Faculty, Mark Milliken, expressed this idea. He said, “[student publications] should have the same rights as [professional] newspapers. They should have journalistic rights as long as the leaders of the school deem that whatever’s being said is factual, is accurate, and isn’t going to create a dis-

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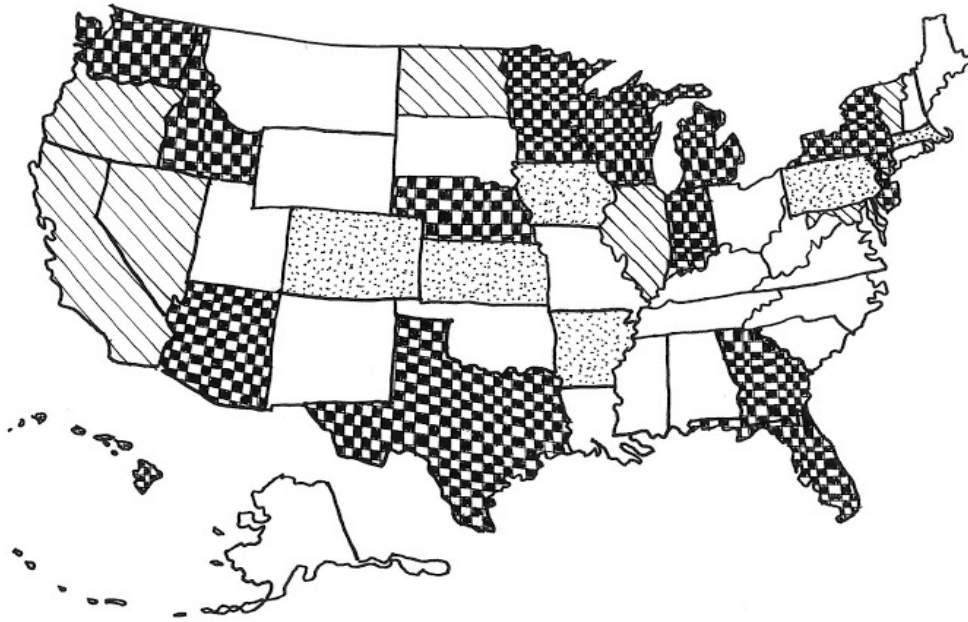
*In 1987, at Hazelwood East High School in Missouri, students in a Journalism 2 class wrote and edited articles for their school newspaper. Two controversial articles were submitted for the last edition of the paper, one about teenage pregnancy and the other about divorce. In the former, young women from their high school anonymously shared their experience with pregnancy. The latter, more of an opinion piece, was a story about a young girl blaming her father’s actions for her parents’ divorce. However, the school principal decided that these articles were inappropriate and stated that these articles would not be allowed in the school paper. His arguments were that the father being discussed in the divorce article should have been able to comment. He also stated that changing the pregnant girls’ names may not protect their identity and that the topic of teenage pregnancy may not be appropriate for younger students. There was no time to edit or re-work these stories, so their pages were simply eliminated from the final paper for that year.*

*The students were frustrated, and they believed that their right to free speech had been violated. They brought their case to the U.S. District Court for Eastern Missouri, claiming that their First Amendment rights had been violated. The District Court ruled against the students. They then appealed to a U.S. Court of Appeals, and the court decided that the school had in fact violated the students’ rights. The U.S. Supreme Court then reversed this ruling, saying that the students’ rights had not been violated.*

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“Keep digging, keep finding those issue articles and try as much as possible to gather a 360 degree view of the topic, of the issue.”



On the map, diagonal lines represent states that have added protection from administrator censorship for both high school and college students. The dots represent states where only high school students have gained protection from censorship. Checker board print represents states where a campaign or legislation is active or pending. The states with no pattern symbolize places where there is no active campaign or legislation.

*During the Tinker v. Des Moines case, four students wore armbands protesting the Vietnam War to school. They were asked to remove the armbands, and when they refused, were suspended. The students and their families submitted that the school was wrong in their censorship. They brought their case to court, and it eventually made it to the Supreme Court. In 1969, the Court ruled in favor of the students, stating that, “it can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional right to freedom of speech at the schoolhouse gate.”*

turbance in our educational environment - because that’s our job: to create an environment that’s safe and nurturing for learning.” Milliken brought up the importance of getting all of the facts of a story, not just focusing on one specific issue or opinion. He closed with, “keep digging, keep finding those issue articles and try as much as possible to gather a 360 degree view of the topic, of the issue.”

Being part of a school newspaper, and being able to tackle those thought-provoking topics is an excellent opportunity for those who hope to pursue journalism throughout their lives. For many students, it is the first real-world exposure to writing articles and gathering news. We don’t want these experiences to be limited without justifiable reason.

According to an article titled, “High School Sophomore Spearheads Campaign for Student Press Freedom Legislation in Rhode Island,” one student, Yanine Castedo, has been making a large effort for student journalist First Amendment rights. She said, “New Voices is important to me because I believe strongly in strengthening student voices. When we talk about improving our education system, we need to ask the people who are involved in it every day — students. New Voices gives them the protection to share their concerns and feelings without fear of backlash from administration. Educational institutions don’t make students stronger by restricting the way we use our voices.”

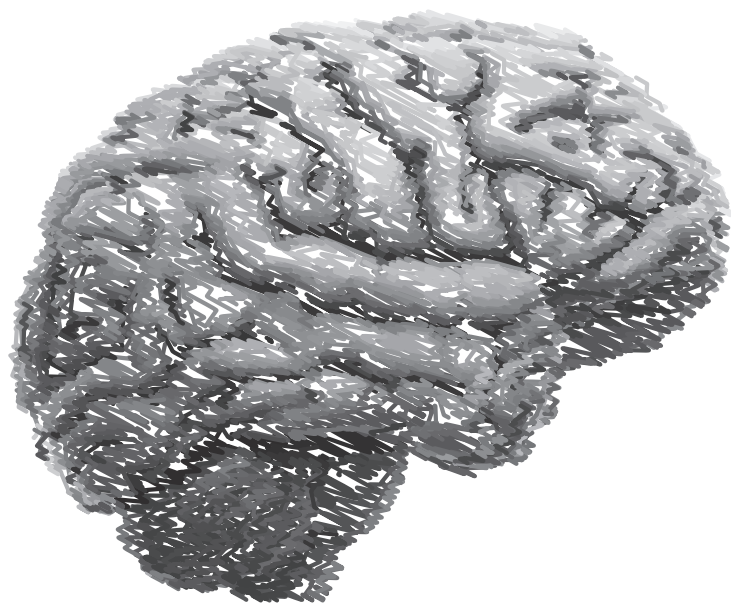
While obtaining First Amendment rights for student journalists may seem like a large task, it has become possible largely in part due to an organization called The Student Press Law Center, or SPLC. It provides

legal assistance to high school and college students regarding their First Amendment rights as journalists. Most of the benefits offered by this organization are free. For example, they offer legal advising for students at no cost. Also, if a student were to need a lawyer to represent them in court, they have a referral network of attorneys that do pro bono work for student journalists. The SPLC is run by a board of directors and one executive director, all of whom work in the fields of journalism or law. Since they are a non-profit organization, they are supported exclusively by donations from charitable foundations, corporations, and student journalists.

This resource, as well as local legislators and journalism experts, will be instrumental if I am to be successful in gaining these rights for public high schools in New Hampshire. While much progress has been made in gaining First Amendment rights for student journalists, there is still much work to be done. We must pursue this New Voices legislation for New Hampshire. We have to make it a priority to teach our youth that student journalists are journalists too. If we come together, this responsibility can become a reality.

The next step I plan on taking is reaching out to local legislators, and getting their opinion on this legislation. My hope is that one of them will be on board, and we can get a campaign started in New Hampshire. For now, the main thing that needs to be done is starting up a New Voices campaign and raising awareness for this cause. If you’re interested in helping out, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Together, we can achieve freedom of the press laws for student journalists. **M**

-Anna Kate Munsey  
Artwork by Chloe Jackson



# The Great Concussion Discussion



Study after study, and article after article (and here's yet another article), people have never been more fearful of concussions. Research is showing that trauma to the head is far worse than what we initially thought, especially with the amount of concussions in the NFL sparking debate of when enough is enough; Many people believe that not letting themselves or a child participate in sports is the best preventative measure to avoiding a potential injury, when in fact, there is no guaranteed way to steer clear of them.

Many are quick to blame athletics, but not all mild traumatic brain injuries come from sports; they can occur from falling, car accidents, or self harm, and it can happen to anyone from a toddler to an elder. Parents should acknowledge the risk of putting their child into a contact sport, but shouldn't deprive children of the great things that athletics have to offer.

Research has shown that multiple concussions can have damaging long-term health effects, otherwise known as 'post concussion syndrome', which includes cognitive, physical and emotional issues. Sometimes, even death is a possibility, with traumatic brain injuries tragically causing 50,000 deaths (mainly from major trauma, like car accidents) in 2013, according cdc.gov's article, "*TBI: Get the Facts*".

Many of the people around you have had a concussion at some point in their life. At least 23% of people have sustained some type of head trauma, according to npr.org's article, "*Poll: Nearly 1 In 4 Americans Reports Having Had A Concussion.*"

The variety in ways which people become concussed also produce different symptoms and feelings, but it rarely manifests itself the same way twice.

Bradyn VanSant, a senior at Exeter High School, has gotten six concussions, presumably from her "clumsiness." Many of these concussions were from just falling and hitting her head, while others ranged from laughing too hard and making cranial-contact with a granite counter-top, getting rear-ended while she was idle in a gokart, and taking a foul ball to the head in softball. Studies have shown that the risk of getting a concussion is increased after having already successive traumas, making it easier to potentially sustain more in the future.

VanSant has experienced every symptom imaginable, like constant headaches, sensitivity to light and sound, confusion, loss of memory, trouble concentrating, nausea, and sadness. "I still have a lot of trouble concentrating and I get headaches," she says. "I've definitely noticed that I have to try much harder in school to get the same grades I used to."

A traumatic brain injury can happen at any time, and it's better to be more cautious after experiencing multiple injuries, but not taking it to the extreme of locking yourself in a padded room: "I am more careful, but not too much where it changes me to the point where I can't do things other kids can do," says VanSant. "I am definitely [more wary], at least a little bit."



Grant Heine ('18) got a concussion while playing soccer, where he got hit and the back of his head went into the ground. He recalls the lights in his room being particularly bright and music would be overwhelmingly loud, along with frequent headaches and nausea. "It was apparently really bad, but I don't remember the rest of that day," Heine elaborated. "It was basically a non-stop headache... and I had to miss the last day of finals." This was not his first concussion, which he got from attempting a backflip for the first time while skiing and, "never really went to the doctor's."

You might be able to avoid participating in contact sports, but a class that everyone has to take at Oyster River High School is Physical Education, in which students must participate in various athletic activities. They do see injuries, but concussions overall are not that common. "We've had a few over the years, but not many," says John Morin, Oyster River P.E. teacher.

"I was on one of those half-exercise balls, and I tried to step off, and I fell onto the floor of the weight room," says Lexy Steele ('18), who became concussed during her sophomore year in gym class. "It took me a few minutes to get up. I threw up, couldn't watch TV, obviously had a headache, and I was really sensitive to light, too."

MOR's very own Skylar Hamilton explains how she got a concussion back in fourth grade, which caused her to blackout: "I was on the ten tire bouncer, and [a student] was really good at swinging it, and my head slammed back into a tire... I forgot what road I lived on. It was scary and I cried a lot. I blacked out and I couldn't see for a few hours, but I was aware of what was going on; I thought I was gonna go blind."

More recently, she got a concussion during theatre rehearsals. "It was a scene in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, where McMurphy is strangling [my character] Nurse Ratched, and we had done the scene in the carpeted bandroom a hundred times. We did it for the first time on the stage... and I slammed my head back because that's what I had been doing on the carpet, and I didn't think about the fact that it was a wood stage," says Hamilton. "I didn't really notice anything at the time, but the next day I did have a pretty bad headache. I was sensitive to light for a few weeks," she says. "And I couldn't drive," after being diagnosed by a medical professional.



"I am more careful, but not too much where it changes me to the point where I can't do things other kids can do."

"It was apparently really bad, but I don't remember the rest of that day."

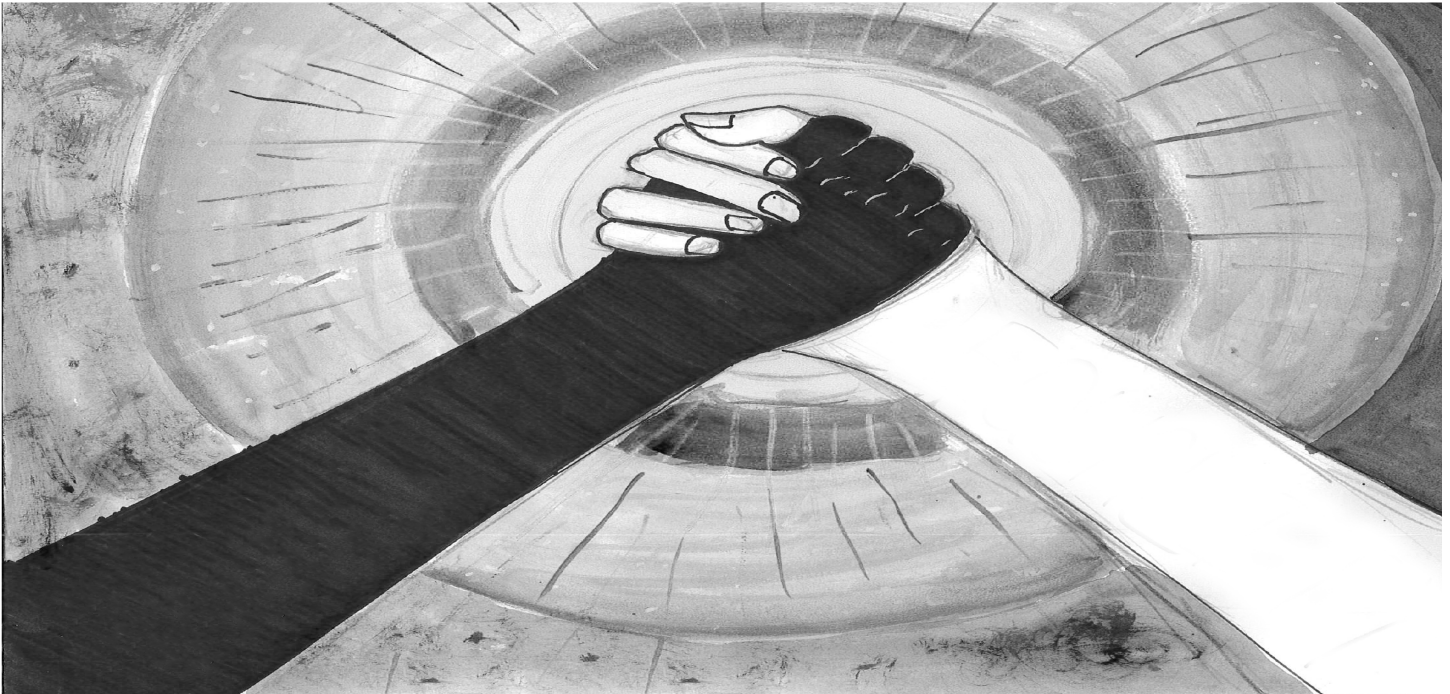
"I blacked out and I couldn't see for a few hours, but I was aware of what was going on; I thought I was gonna go blind."



Concussions can come from anywhere, and they're not always that preventable, even with equipment on. Should you let the idea of it stop you from playing a sport you're interested in? No, of course not, but you should understand that there is potential injuries you can sustain, and that can include everything from a broken leg, to a dislocated finger, to whiplash. I, myself, have never gotten a concussion, and I have participated in tons of sports, from soccer to gymnastics, to ice hockey and lacrosse. No one can guarantee or fully prevent a concussion, but you should not live in fear of the idea of it and let it stop you from exploring new activities. **M**

- Jess Speechley

# A System of Love



At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, the ORCSD Community experienced incidents of racism. Back in September, an elementary aged boy was taunted with racial comments and unwanted physical contact on an Oyster River elementary school bus. In addition, there have been racially motivated jokes reported at the middle school. Due to these events, the Oyster River community has come together in attempt to find a solution. Living in our small, sheltered ORCSD community, it can sometimes be tempting to keep our rose colored glasses on and block out what goes on around us. We tend to hide our problems and bury them deep underground, hoping the issue will resolve itself. Rarely, though, that is the outcome. Unfortunately, the world isn't all rainbows and butterflies, and if we have a problem, we need to be proactive and fix it. This is true for the recent issues of discrimination in our district. There is no easy solution to solve the issue of discrimination in our district, but what I do know is that it's going to take more than just a few individuals; it's going to take all of us coming together as a real community. It's going to take all of us not being afraid to talk about things that may scare us or even make us uncomfortable. In some ways, Oyster River has already begun this process. Back in October, a diversity forum was held at Oyster River High School. This forum was the most attended forum in six years with over 450 people in attendance. Despite the fact that the forum was full of people of all different ages, ethnicities, and beliefs, everyone was in support to finding a solution to the existing discrimination in our district. From this outcome, it is clear the OR community is committed to solving this problem. When attending the diversity forum, I felt hope that we as a community could really make a difference. There is something special about being surrounded by a room of people all willing to do whatever it takes to make a change. From specifically focusing on the diversity forum and the ORCSD staff training, I think there are many ways that we can begin to solve the issue of discrimination in our district. The forum was moderated by Andrew Smith, the New Hampshire Disproportionate Minority Contact Coordinator, who spoke briefly before the forum began. Smith introduced the audience to the difference between equality and equity. His goal was to give people insight between the two and to teach acceptance versus tolerance. When I attended the forum, I had no idea what to expect. My original assumption was that most people probably were not willing to talk about the actual problem. I assumed we were going to spend the night beating around the bush. I have never been happier to be wrong. Every single person at that forum was fully committed to solving the issue of discrimination in our district. No one was afraid of speaking the truth. There was such a strong vibe of acceptance in the entire room. It didn't matter if you were black, white, gay, straight or anything else. Everyone had one goal in mind: making our district one that accepts anyone and everyone.



"I predict you may be uncomfortable at times and your belief system will change," stated ORCSD superintendent Dr. James Morse, kicking off the forum. Morse began the night speaking about his own personal experiences with discrimination. Growing up with an alcoholic, abusive father caused him to be treated differently throughout his childhood. Morse took this opportunity to use his experience for the greater good of teaching the audience. Nine additional speakers joined Morse in telling their stories and addressing how they feel the issue of racism and discrimination in the ORCSD can be solved. The first speaker of the night was Scott Hampton. Hampton was fearless. His presentation focused on white privilege, which surprised a lot of the audience. Hampton chose to speak on a topic that most people, especially in our community, are hesitant to talk about. He was not afraid to say that he has been given certain privileges based off of the color of his skin. This was the perfect way to start off the night. Hampton immediately taught all of us that it is more than okay to talk about things that may be uncomfortable, in order to find a solution. Grace Caudill Wilson, the mother of a student who experienced racial discrimination, spoke alongside her husband, Ben Caudill, telling their story. Given all they have gone through since moving here in July, it would be expected that they would be angry, but they are full of love. She told her story of being supported and accepted when they first moved here, and that's what she wants to focus on. Caudill Wilson feels no reason to focus on hate and discrimination when we could all come together. Sometimes, it is so easy to be angry when something bad happens to us, but Caudill Wilson chose to do the opposite. "We want to show you love," she added. Caudill Wilson's solution is plain and simple: love. "Racism will not go away with laws. What we need is love," Caudill Wilson said. "You cannot legislate the heart."

After hearing Caudill Wilson speak was when my views really began to change. If I was in her shoes, I don't think I would have had the composure to react in the graceful and calm way that she did. I have always been a strong believer that we shouldn't cover up our problems, but Caudill Wilson introduced me to another way to fix problems: love. Being able to forgive in such serious situations like this one can be really scary and sometimes doesn't seem possible. Caudill Wilson proved that it is possible, and it is the way to begin to end this issue of discrimination. We all need to focus on love a little more.

The forum not only focused on issues of racial discrimination, but also issues of discrimination based on gender, sexuality, and stereotypes. A parent of the ORCSD community, Shannon Brown, taught the audience about "the danger of a single story." Brown opened her speech by asking the audience to look at her and think about what her life is probably like. "You see me, and you probably assume I am married, I have children that I birthed, and I am straight," said Brown. She continued by saying she is divorced, she now identifies as queer, and one of her children is adopted.

This exercise put into perspective for us how dangerous it is to make assumptions on people. We all have our own stories that we often choose not to share with others around us, based on fear of being judged. Brown also asked an important question: "what about you do you not often share with others, and why?" There was a definite shift when Brown spoke. She was a wake up call for everyone, including myself, in that room. Brown opened our eyes to understand that discrimination occurs in all shapes and forms.

This open-minded attitude continued throughout the night, with both speakers and audience members working together to find solutions and answer questions. At the start of the forum, Smith expressed that his goal for the night was to gain insight on the difference between equality and equity.

As the night came to a close, many audience members asked a pivotal question: what comes next? We had an issue, we are here talking about it, but what are we going to do to change it? The ORCSD administration is working hard to address this question, but it is not an easy task. The idea is to work with all different aspects of the district on the issues of discrimination.

All ORCSD faculty underwent a morning of diversity training led by Smith. Smith spends these training sessions educating the faculty, rather than just telling them what they've done wrong. I had the opportunity to sit in on one of Smith's diversity trainings, where my own outlook on the issue was changed. On the surface, spending over three hours in a lecture doesn't sound that appealing, but trust me, it was worth every minute. Smith was able to get a room full of adults to break down their walls and be honest with those around them. These adults were willing to learn and see the issue of discrimination in a whole new light. An attitude like this needs to be implemented throughout the entire Oyster River community, not just with the faculty. Given that the incidents occurred between students, it makes the most sense that the students should be first-hand involved with finding a solution.


Similarly, in the classrooms, teachers have been asked to include the topic of diversity frequently in their curriculum. This is in hopes of making students more familiar with all types of differences. ORCSD believes that educating students and faculty on what exactly discrimination is and how it can end is the way to stop the issue.

After proctoring the forum, Smith believes, "people are beginning to understand that what happened wasn't a one time thing. There's a

series of things that have happened, and probably will continue to happen, that is necessary to get a handle on." I spent some time talking with

Smith about exactly how he thinks we really can go about solving this issue. Smith's advice is based completely off of what we are interested in. "What's also important is what do they want to do? There's some things that I could suggest they could do, but that might not have anything to do with what they want to do. The bigger question is what do they want to do now?" said Smith. The issue of discrimination in the Oyster River community is way too big to solve only one way. This is not the type of problem that has an easy answer. It is going to take every single member of the community asking themselves exactly what they want to do about the issue.

By finding something you're passionate about and connecting that with the topic you're trying to learn about, anyone and everyone can be involved in solving the issue of discrimination in the Oyster River community. For example, if you're interested in sports, look up athletes who have been discriminated against in their field. No matter how much or little you choose to be involved, everyone can have a part. As a community we can come together, and be aware of the issues in our community. "If people share what they're interested in with others, they might be interested in the same thing. So now you have two people interested, sharing the same concern. The more you talk and share, the more people will become interested, and then you're off to the races," Smith said.

It is clear to everyone in the ORCSD community that this issue of discrimination is far from solved, but we are on the right path. The conversation has begun, and now it is our job to continue working together to be an accepting community. It's time to stop hiding our issues and be open with the mistakes we as a community have made. In the words of Morse, "let this school system be one of love." 

*"Racism will not go away with laws. What we need is love."*

-Skylar Hamilton  
Artwork by Casey Budday

# THE CITY IS CALLING



You wake up in your dorm room to the sound of busy streets below. You look out at the view from your window, where the sun rises above the cityscape. It's a brand new day in your new home, where will it take you? Perhaps you'll see a play and grab a slice of pizza on a street corner, or maybe you'll try to conquer the beast that is navigating the transportation system. The opportunities are endless, and you just can't wait to embrace them all. For a moment, you feel like Dorothy Gale from *The Wizard of Oz* - you're not in the suburbs anymore.

For the first eight years of my life, I lived in Orono, Maine, home of the University of Maine. Since then, I've lived and attended school right down the street from the University of New Hampshire. I've always known that college would be my next step after high school, but location was never something that came to mind until the end of my sophomore year. I'd always just assumed that all colleges were like the ones I'd grown up around, but I came to the realization that this wasn't the case. I researched schools that were in the middle of major cities, and quickly found that this was the type of college I wanted to attend. I realized that the opportunities and experiences I need to grow as a person simply wouldn't happen for me if I stuck to my small town ways.

Throughout the college application process, people have expressed their concern to me. "Living in a city is a major transition, do you think you can handle that?" These comments definitely made me second guess everything, but then I thought, what's so wrong with changing up my lifestyle? If I don't push myself now, then maybe I'll end up in the same small town for my whole life, regretting not taking a chance. I'm old enough to know what I want, but young enough that I still have a lot to learn, and the city can teach it all to me.

"I've always lived in a small town, and I wanted something new and exciting," says Arabella Reece ('16), a sophomore at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Reece expressed that she knows there are opportunities for fun and adventure on every college campus, but feels there are even more in an urban environment. "I think there are more opportunities external to your school when you go to college in a city," she says. More often than not, I find myself bored with the opportunities for fun in my area. In a city, you can try a new restaurant every night, attend professional sporting events, or

even simply explore fun and unique neighborhoods.

In addition to all of the fun that attending college in a city provides, you'll still be receiving an excellent education. Some of the most prestigious and highly acclaimed universities in the country are located in cities. In fact, eleven of the top twenty schools on US News and World Report's annual ranking of colleges are in major US cities.

Olivia Clark ('15), a student at New York University, is grateful for the academic and professional opportunities the school and the city have given her. "I've gotten to work in the music and television industries," she says. "I wouldn't have had these opportunities if I'd stayed in New Hampshire."

On top of academics, the city can teach you many valuable life lessons. "It helps you become more independent," says Reece. "You're going to become more independent wherever you go to college, but I think living in a city forces you to be more responsible for yourself and your friends." Clark says that city living has forced her to become more mature. "From living in my own apartment, to interning all day followed by class at night, I feel like a real adult in the 'real world,'" she says.

Attending college in a city won't just be valuable while you're a student, it will also be beneficial in the long run. "Schools in the city are just more connected to whatever industry you want to get into," says Maritza Bagnall, a graduate of Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts. Bagnall also notes the constant action of city life as helpful in keeping her motivated. "The fast pace will help you work hard, focus, and succeed," she says.

As I reflect on my childhood, I feel grateful to have been raised in a small, tight knit community that has given and taught me so much that will stay with me forever. With that being said, I know there are so many places out there that will expose me to new and exciting people and experiences. The environment in which you grow up shapes so much of who you are, but in order to grow as a person, it's important to step out of your comfort zone expose yourself to unfamiliar territory. The transition from highschool to college will be a big change no matter what, so if you're going to make that leap, it may as well be a big one. **M**

-Maisie Cook

# Why You Shouldn't be Afraid of Trying New Things.



My first day of swim practice started at 5:00 a.m in the UNH pool. I remember being nervous and excited. It was going to be a fresh start. There I was in my baggy blue swimsuit, that I would later find was two sizes too big, and my dad's old goggles standing near the edge of the pool. I was surrounded by a flock of muscular teenagers, who I thought looked like Olympic grade swimmers. I felt extremely self conscious. I had no clue why I was there, and even more embarrassing was the fact that I didn't even have a swim cap.

For me swim team was a new and daunting task that I had set out to conquer, but like many people who go out of their comfort zone it was not an easy experience.

In most cases it's reasonable and even expected to be afraid of trying something new, due to the fact that it could potentially be uncomfortable and even embarrassing at times. But getting over the fear of being awkward and out of place is essential to enjoying the activity and high school is probably one of the best places to be when diving into new sports.

I jumped into competitive swimming my sophomore year of high school in a spur of the moment decision. Joining the team posed a challenge for me that I felt I would not find in any other clubs, and I was excited by the fact that I was joining completely by myself. This was a very risky decision, not only did I have to learn how to swim but I also had to try fitting into a new group of friends.

Diving into swim knowing nothing about the sport was absolutely terrifying. I was forcing myself to go out of my comfort zone in the most embarrassing ways possible. I am positive the coach, along with my fellow teammates, mistook my pitiful attempt at butterfly as actual drowning.

Yet, each day I forced myself to swallow my pride and ask for help to learn new techniques to improve my stroke. I saw my stroke and endurance slowly improve. I gradually got better and started to enjoy learning and improving the strokes that I had previously dreaded doing.

Learning is an important part of trying a new activity, especially something that involves being physically active.

Kieran Murphy, a swimmer turned runner, first started running as a junior in high school after the cross country coach approached him and asked him to join the team. "The first practice was not so great, I don't know why I even went back. But I didn't want to quit something I started, eventually it turned into my fun sport and it was something I did for fun because I wanted to."

Murphy who has now become one of the top runners in the state reflected on the fact that the future opportunities he has now due to his amazing running career would never had happened if he had chosen to not continue after the first day of practice.

"I continued because I liked the sport itself, for what it is. Because at first I wasn't good at it, I was terrible. I had to build to what I am today."

Although Murphy ended up becoming a top state runner, you shouldn't expect yourself to become extraordinary at a new activity. Instead you should continue in the activity because you love it, and set your own goals which are reasonable to your skill level.

Doing something because you are in love with doing it is immensely important to how successful you can be. If you don't love what you are doing then why are you going to want to put your whole effort into the activity.

Jane Spear, who just recently started doing yoga this year, loves that it has presented her with a challenge and is an activity that she has to work really hard on in order to progress.

"I think there is something to say when you try something and you're not the best at the start, but when you start to improve you can become proud of the progress you make"

Spear, who is now a self proclaimed yoga addict, has found that although she is still a novice to the sport she loves the challenge that

**"...I think trying different things no matter what they are, and working on trying to better yourself in the activity is a good life skill to have."**

it presents to her, "It helps me put things in perspective. I think trying different things no matter what they are, and working on trying to better yourself in the activity is a good life skill to have."

Being able to put oneself on the line and risk trying new activities is not only a good life skill but it is also greatly beneficial to a person's health.

In our brains, learning and joy are closely connected. New and positive experiences help to activate the learning process.

Trying new things is not just good for you mentally, by helping you to make goals and boost your confidence when you accomplish something, but it can also be good for your health. Especially if you are challenging yourself by trying a new sport or other physical activity.

Jessie Banafato, who had previously done soccer for most of her high school career decided that she would run cross country during her final year of high school.

"{Cross Country} made me healthier, because I was so used to running. I wasn't going to stop running after the season ended and I know it's something I can do for the rest of my life. I don't think I would've done that if I hadn't done cross country."

So during your high school career, open yourself up to trying new activities and sports. Although there is no age limit to trying new activities, despite social perceptions, high school is the best time to get out of your comfort zone because everyone is in the same boat as you. **M**

-Sophie Graff



# DOUBLE DOUBT

I've been growing out my armpit hair since July 2017.

I found no issue with my body hair in the summer when I was surrounded by either my friends or complete strangers. In fact, most of time I completely forgot that I even had body hair.

However, when school started in September, it was a different story. I found myself becoming more self conscious and aware of my body hair. I didn't want to wear tank tops or raise my hand in class.

After receiving a few offhanded comments along the lines of, "that's actually kind of gross," I realized that as much as I preached body positivity, I, like most high schoolers, still cared about what my peers thought of me. I had always stated that I was pro body hair on women, but I started second guessing my beliefs.

When I first stopped regularly shaving, I wasn't trying to make a statement. Most of the time I was either too busy or simply didn't care enough. The people who appeared to care the most were those around me.

Sara Diharce ('18) stopped shaving for about two months beginning her junior year. "I was lazy, and after awhile I just thought it was kind of funny," she said, "I even attempted to dye my armpit hair with kool aid!"

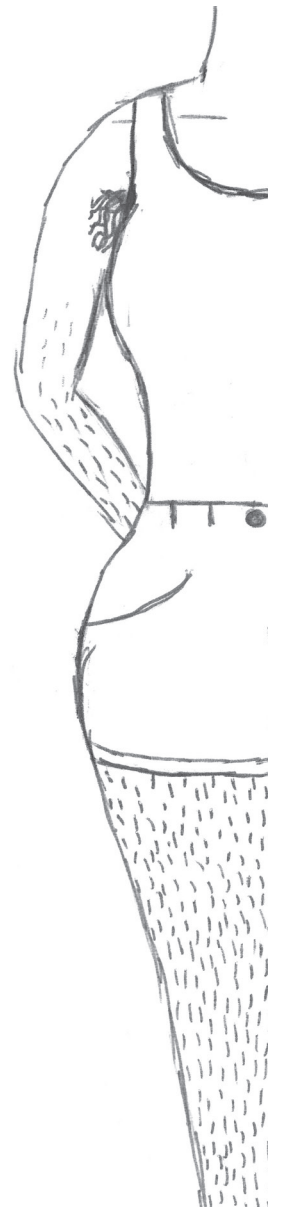
It is no one's goal to be viewed as gross and unattractive, especially in high school. "Every time people would see it in the locker room they'd be like, '\*pffft\* what are you doing? That's nasty girl!' and I just thought it was funny. I don't really care what people think," said Diharce.

Even with an ever growing empowerment of women, our society still generally frowns upon the ones who choose to keep their body hair. It is hippocratic to support female empowerment but shame women for their body hair.

Diharce started shaving again to keep up good level of personal hygiene and professionalism. "If you want to shave, shave! Boy or girl," said Diharce, "I don't think it should necessarily be a movement because that just makes it seem like it's a bigger deal than it is. You should just be able to do whatever you want with your body hair."

From what I've seen, the number of women who are choosing to not shave is increasing, and it is often the other people who make the biggest deal out of it. They declare it as some, "big feminist statement," as Liliana Mangan ('17) an Oyster River Alumni and former Mouth of the River Staff member puts it.

Mangan stopped regularly shaving her legs about two years ago. "People have asked me why I don't shave my legs, and they always expect some deep, well thought out, philosophical answer that they can argue about with me," said Mangan, "It really bothers



# STANDARDS

# STANDARDS



people when I say, 'I just don't want to.'

We live in a society that thrives off of the enhancement of both the male and female bodies. "I definitely think there is a level of empowerment when, as a woman, you choose to stop removing your body hair. You definitely save a lot of money on razors," said Mangan.

It is very expensive to keep up with society's beauty standards. "There's a whole market built up around female hair removal and cosmetics and it's a multimillion dollar industry, so it doesn't surprise me that the 'status quo' of women being hairless has stuck around for so long," said Mangan.

I would like to make it clear that I'm not saying someone is a better person for not shaving. I'm saying women should have the social freedom to do what they want with their body hair. The treatment of body hair should be equal for both sexes.

Men are not unaffected by today's body hair standards. They often experience the other end of the stick, where it is considered "too feminine" to shave their legs.

In Ancient Greece, having body hair was considered uncivilized all around. It was common for both men and women to remove all of their body hair, especially the upper class.

Today, although it is less common, some still do that. Matt Nixon ('18) chooses to shave most of his body hair. "Personally I find body hair to be rather gross on myself ... I like to hold myself to the same standards I hold other people to," said Nixon.

I completely respect people like Nixon. If you don't want to see someone's chest hair bulging out from underneath their shirt or their leg hair popping out from beneath their tights, that is perfectly reasonable. There is a degree of professionalism to having a fresh shave. Showing up to a meeting with a 'five o'clock shadow' can give a sloppy impression.

"Not having body hair helps with [my] body image, self confidence, and sweat," states Nixon, "I think it's fine for women to have body hair if that's their choice, but I prefer shaved people."

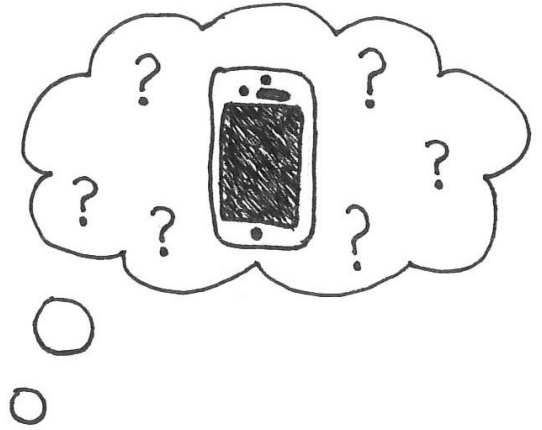
It's inevitably up to each person to determine their opinion on body hair. But I ask you to look at the bigger picture when you do. It's important to determine if you see a value in shaving or if you are only doing it (or not doing it if you're a man) because society expects you too. Social expectations and norms affect everyone in their own way.

There is a double standard when it comes to body hair. Women are being judged more harshly for their body hair than men are. Despite all of the advances we have made towards gender equality, there are still major gaps that need to be filled.

We're all in this together. Men and women both have expectations that are built off of societal values, that may not align with our individual taste. Being true to our own values and morals will help shift the societal norms to be more accepting and encouraging. That's the type of world I want to live in. **M**

-Lauren Quest

# Phone Addiction



I sit at my desk with my head down and eyes locked on my illuminating iPhone screen. Disregarding my teacher's class introduction, I rapidly tap my fingers on the screen. I frantically try to catch up on all of the Instagram posts I missed and Snapchats I received during my walk to class. My social media habits have stolen my attention from the subject at hand.

Recently, there have been discussions at the Oyster River School Board meetings regarding the need for cell phone policies at the middle school and the elementary schools. The discussions have not focused on the high school because a current cell phone policy already exists and reads as follows: "students can use cell phones in class to the teacher's choice." However, determining whether this policy focuses on in class cell phone usage solely for educational purposes can be difficult.

The current cell phone policy seems to be ineffective. I have witnessed several students, including myself, getting away with hiding their phones under their desk to text one of their friends, Snapchat someone, or check social media all during class.

Charlotte Clarke ('18) said that, "if there's a chance for a student to use their phone in class, then they'll use it. For example, at school, sometimes when a teacher tells a group of students to grab a computer to do research, the students will tell the teacher they have their phone. However, the students don't do the research, they are actually busy Snapchatting or playing games."

Oyster River High School has a high percentage of students who own smartphones. Many students have access to their cell phones during school and are often found using them in the hallways or during class. According to, "The Latest on Teen Cell Phone Addiction" by Newport Academy, teenagers use their mobile phones an average of about seven hours a day. Unfortunately, I can say I fall into that category.

Throughout the school day, I constantly find myself checking my phone, relying on my phone, and not being able to take a break from my phone. To help decrease the amount of hours a teenager spends on their phone, I suggest that clearer regulations of cell phone usage should be implemented at Oyster River.

To resolve this matter, students should be confined to using their cell phones solely for academic purposes in a classroom. If a student is caught misusing their cell phone, the device should be confiscated for

the duration of the class period. At the end of the class, the student should regain possession of their phone, however if misuse continues, additional restrictions should be imposed for that student.

At this age, students should realize they are at school to learn, not to be on their phone. I find myself wondering why teenagers, as well as myself, are constantly on their cell phone when all of their peers are with them; what could they possibly be "missing" on social media if everyone is at school?

Barbara Milliken, an Oyster River French teacher, spoke about this idea. "I think kids are addicted to being connected. I think that we have generally, as a society, become really compulsive about being connected at all times and being omniscient and just having our finger on the pulse of absolutely everything and that's an issue."

Society has evolved to being connected because technology has become easily accessible and social media has grown. Now, everyone

seems to have some form of a personal account or profile on social media. The growth in popularity of social media has caused many to become hooked on keeping their profile updated to inform their friends and family of what they are doing or the experiences they are having, even from afar. Because information is constantly being updated, society, especially teenagers, including myself, has formed habits based on curiosity of what others are doing.

Clarke responded to this idea. "Society has evolved to being connected because everyone feels if you stay connected, then you don't feel as lonely. Also, you can see what everyone is doing at the moment. It's the new thing for our generation. We've grown up with technology, so that's what we do now."

Although teenagers are not the only ones guilty of being cell phone dependent, many still undoubtedly are. According to "Cell Phone Addiction is Real in Teens," by John Douillard, a doctor in the field of natural health and sports medicine, more than 70% of teenagers own a smartphone and 50% of those teenagers admitted to being addicted. Unhappily, I can say I fall into that 50%.

Teenagers find phones so addictive because of the constant stream of notifications, the continuous updating of social media accounts, and the never ending want of being active online.

This cell phone dependency has a definite impact on a teenager's academic experiences and has the potential to disrupt a teenager's





performance in school. The constant yearning of what is happening on social media can grab a student's attention, including my own, and prevent them from fully focusing on an academic task. This can result in the student overlooking the lesson that is being discussed in class, which can interfere with their understanding of the material. The continuance of this has the potential to cause a student to fall behind.

Clarke supported this idea. "When kids are on their phones during class and not paying attention, then you can see their grades go down. I know from experience. I used my phone a lot during class sophomore year and my grades were terrible. My phone was the main factor to having a lower GPA." After sophomore year, Clarke realized that limiting her phone use in school only benefitted her.

Along with this, other circumstances can impede a student's focus. According to Newport Academy, phone dependency can cause teenagers to experience numerous phenomenon: anxiety when without their phone, sore neck and headaches from extensive phone use, "phantom vibration syndrome" which is a term to describe when false phone vibrations are heard, tiredness due to extensive phone use at night, and a disinterest in other activities to be on their phone.

However, with the drawbacks come advantages. During school, having a cell phone can be useful for contacting parents, teachers, or coaches, using Facebook, the Internet, Google Documents, and for quick research.

In addition, teachers find cell phones can be useful in the classroom. Milliken noted that cell phones can be useful for, "Kahoot, Quizlet Live, Word Reference, and voice memos. So there are definitely good uses for cell phones, but I think it has to be monitored."

Along with teachers, students find having easy access to their cell phone is convenient.

Cameron St. Ours ('19) stated that, with a phone, he has "something to look up due dates, find quick summative information, a calculator, and even a dictionary. I use it for all of the above."

Likewise, Hannah Jane Wilson ('18) said, having a phone is helpful to,

"watch video notes, type on documents, send an email, or see club posts on Facebook."

Considering all of this, the most effective way to handle the cell phone calamity is to ensure all teachers clearly enforce cell phone policies in their classroom and ensure all students are using their cell phones for academic purposes in the classroom. Currently, a handful of teachers have strict rules regarding cell phones, however some are more lenient with cell phone usage. With more defined rules, teenager's cell phone dependency, including my own, could lessen.

Mark Milliken, the Oyster River Dean of Faculty, noted that, "the teachers who have the least amount of problems have clear rules about it."

*"Unless a teacher tells them to take their phone out, then they are absolutely responsible for taking it out. If they are on their phone the entire class, then it's on them."*

Despite the potential implementation of stricter policies, teenagers' cell phone usage is dependent upon themselves; it is their choice of whether they want it to get in the way of their academic experiences.

St. Ours said that, "unless a teacher tells them to take their phone out, then they are absolutely responsible for taking it out. If they are on their phone

the entire class, then it's on them."

Wilson has similar sentiments. "It's really on the student to decide when it is and isn't an appropriate time to use a cell phone." She continued, "for those students who choose to use their phones at inappropriate times, yes it is a problem, but that's on them."

Aside from all of this, phones are becoming more prevalent within the lives of students and a school policy will not entirely change the fact that students are so dependent upon their phone. However, the implementation of a school cell phone policy could potentially open up a student's awareness on the fact that they do not need possession of their phone during class or even during school. This could help to lessen my, as well as my peers, phone use in school, which would allow the Oyster River student body to have more face-to-face conversations with one another and truly live in the present. **M**

- Abby Schmitt

# MAKERSPACE

"It's gotten really quiet in there, I used to have to ask them to quiet down but [this semester] that's only ever happened a couple times during E [period]," says Cathi Stetson.

With the makerspace practically empty during most periods of the day, it's time to examine what has led the makerspace to only be used during two periods of the day—unlike previous years. There are some issues that I feel need to be resolved for the space to grow from here.

In the fall of 2015, Pamela Carr, the computer science teacher, and Kathy Pearce, the head librarian, wrote a grant to create a Makerspace at Oyster River High School which they named The Hack Shack. A Makerspace is a community space where people can come to have access to tools such as 3D printers, Dremels and soldering irons as well as any other equipment that they might not usually have access to. The Makerspace is located in the former library project room between the computer science room and the library. The main purpose of the Makerspace for Oyster River is to have a student run space that can assist both students and teachers with technology help as well as creating a location for more advanced technologies that would not have been available otherwise. In the Makerspace, the students running the space are referred to as "staff" and "customers" are anyone coming in for help or to do a project. Over the first two years of existence, the Maker-

**"I don't know how to use a lot of the stuff in there and I also don't know what stuff in there I can use."**

space grew exponentially in amount of people coming in and in the general popularity of the space averaging about 10 to 12 people per day. However, at the beginning of this year, the third year of the space, that trend seems to have changed.

Nowadays, around eight people come in each day. These visitors are primarily focused into only E and F periods. "It's really in a downed state right now," says Cole Brisson ('18), a staff member at the Oyster River Makerspace. Brisson has been a regular patron of the Makerspace in previous years and became a staff member during the first semester of this year. In previous years, though, I feel that the amount of people coming in during each individual period was not as large as certain periods this year, but the total people coming in each day and week was far higher in previous years. I believe the best way to bring in more "customers" and increase the use of the Makerspace is to have more workshops in the room having either more of them or better spread out bringing in interested students that way.

The big problem Brisson sees is that the space tries to be something it's not. "It tries to be a project space but it's a really small room, It tries to be a creative space but people aren't really given that creative freedom," explains Brisson.

"I don't know how to use a lot of the stuff in there and I also don't know what stuff in there I can use," explains Shealyn Paré ('18). Paré does not frequent the makerspace because of a lack of understanding as to what is available to customers, as well as the lack of knowledge surrounding how to use many of the devices which is a big problem for the space. One of Paré's possible solutions is to put up posters near each

tool to explain some common uses for it and who is allowed to use it.

Cathi Stetson also has ideas as to what the problems are, such as lack of communication between staff members. Another idea Stetson has is that the staff members need to find interesting things to show off which might not be what was popular last year or that the staff have



already discovered. "People need to show off what can be done in the space." I fully agree.

Some people have different opinions about the success of the Makerspace. "I definitely don't think it's going downhill; there are tons of people coming in during certain periods," explains Pearce after being asked about her opinion of the Hack Shack's current state. Pearce points out how each semester of the space is different and how it really takes three years to totally know if the space will do well or not. "It's a student run makerspace, which not many other schools have, so that's pretty unique," adds Pearce. Overall, the biggest problem in Pearce's mind is that the space is under utilized and the class is not marketed enough. In fact, few people even know that the space is both student run and that the running of the space is a class one can take as an elective.

Whether one feels the space is on a bad trajectory or just hasn't reached its true potential, we can all agree that there are some chang-

**"We really just need to get customers in, word of mouth is super important for this kind of thing,"**

es that need to be made to improve the space. "The kids who work in the space would do much better as customers," says Pearce. Pearce is referring to the fact that many people who take the class to work in the makerspace are not truly interested in teaching others the technology but instead using it themselves. Stetson, the other advising teacher for the makerspace, thinks the best solution to get the space used is to just get more people in and "playing in the space."

Brisson has some very clear ideas as to what needs to change to improve the space: "They just really need to make a mission statement or a list of tasks or projects people could work on," says Brisson. Another thing that both Stetson and Brisson mentioned is decorating or re-organizing the space. "We really just need to get customers in .... word of mouth is super important for this kind of thing," adds Brisson. Clearly the best way to save this space is for more people to come in and experience it. "It's all about getting the kids who could be interested into the space on a regular basis," says Pearce. **M**

- Coleman Moore

# HOW TO ADULT

As the end of high school starts to creep closer, you're probably beginning to realize that those blissful childhood years are gone. Pretty soon, you'll be entering adult life, and the more you think about it, the more you start to panic. All those times you watched someone else make dinner for you, were you actually paying attention? Do you actually even know how to do anything? Well don't worry, there's no need to panic anymore. Now, thanks to Oyster River's new Adulting: Skills For Life class, students will be learning much more than how to cook!



Students were given a survey about what sorts of new classes they would enjoy at Oyster River and Adulting was introduced this year as a new class. After many requests for this class by the student body, along with the school board shifting their focus on wellness this year, the Adulting class came alive.

The teaching position for Adulting was offered to Nick Ricciardi, who also teaches Culinary, Bake Shop, Fuel and Fitness, and Nutrition. "My goal is to give everyone the most accurate view of what their life is going to look like after high school and teach them the things that they're not going to learn in other classes," said Ricciardi.

Adulting aims to teach you skills from basic home maintenance to group interactions to learning how to make a simple meal for yourself.

"We learned how to paint [and] put painter's tape up. We learned how to put drywall anchors in so that you can hang pictures and murals on your wall. We talked about what it means to be a tenant, what are your responsibilities, how do you get an apartment, what are your landlords responsibilities? A lot of the stuff that people don't figure out until they're in their twenties when they're living it," explained Ricciardi.

Max Wagner ('19) recommends this class to those in their last two years of high school, remarking on the importance of retaining the information the class provides when it's relevant. Wagner explained the success of the class and how useful it has been so far. "I enjoy it. The class is successful at teaching me the importance of things I may not have acknowledged other-wise in regards to being grown up," he said. "It's honestly like I'm receiving cheat codes for adult life."

The students in working on a life bud-

to give me what a month is going to look like for them in about ten years or five years. They have to find a job, they get a salary, we subtract student loans, taxes, social security [and more] from that. They have to get an apartment, a car, they have to give me a shopping list for what a week's worth is and then they sort of extrapolate that to over a month," said Ricciardi.

Darienne Merrill ('18) found out about Adulting from a friend. "I decided I wanted to take [Adulting] because it sounded like a class that's actually useful. You learn skills for life that high school doesn't normally teach you. [For example], on block Fridays we cook simple recipes," said Merrill.

Merrill's father expressed how important he thinks this class is for students and has already seen a huge leap in his daughter's independence. "I think it can be a great help with preparing for the future. The class helps bring students the knowledge to deal with many things they will need to do for themselves after high school," Mark Merrill said.

To Wagner's point, Ricciardi also recommends that people start taking this class in their junior and senior years. "It's okay for sophomores, but I think it's still so far away from them it's hard for them to see it as real," Ricciardi said.

Interested in Adulting? So far this class is only being offered first semester. However, Ricciardi said that may change in the near future depending on the number of people signing up, but for now they are offering it at least once a year. Keep an eye out folks! Adult life will be here before you know it. **M**

-Hannah Croasdale



# WOMEN IN

Charlene Steele, a communications lieutenant in the army from 1988 to '91, was giving a very important presentation to the commander. "We were changing over all our equipment from one style to a more modern newer style, and I had to prepare a whole briefing to show what we were going to have, and how it was going to work," said Steele.

"It was pretty complex because communication is everything when you're dealing with artillery. It was a lot of work... when I was done he was really impressed with it and he was like, 'Wow! I didn't know that you could do that, or that you had that much knowledge.' I was like, why wouldn't I be able to convey that knowledge to you but some guy could!"

According to the Pew Research Institute, women make up a mere 15% of the U.S. Military. For a while, going into the military was seen as something for men alone, but now the times are changing. Since 1990, there has been a 4% increase in the number of women serving in the military. Before 2013, women weren't allowed to have direct combat roles in the military, which severely limited the number of positions that were available for them.

However female stereotypes are still extremely present in the military. This directly correlates with the fact that women are underrepresented in military roles.

It is still a fairly new thing for women to be seen in military roles, and society hasn't fully adapted to this new change. It's become standard for women to not be treated equally in the military, and many have just accepted that that is the way things are.

It is important to address that women aren't often treated equally in the military. Addressing the issue is the first step towards a solution.

I interviewed a few people who've been involved with the military. Here are their stories.



*Picture from Hope Mariacher*

## Hope Mariacher ('18):

Mariacher is in the process of enlisting in the Navy. She hopes to be a Master in Arms which is a MP (Military Police Officer).

This will be Mariacher's second year doing Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). ROTC is a popular choice for those who know they want to go into the military. "A lot of [the Navy] is built into it, but it's a citizenship development class. They're not preparing us for the military, but we will be benefited," said Mariacher. "I'll know a lot more of the basics going in. I'll even finish boot camp a rank higher because I've done ROTC."

On Wednesdays, all ROTC members are required to wear their uniforms. Mariacher has noticed that in school people tend to treat her with more respect when she's wearing her uniform. "The teachers always compliment me... some of the kids will try to salute me or they'll hold the door open for me," said Mariacher. "You do get weird looks and glares sometimes, but you just look at them and they get scared."

There are about 60 guys and 6 girls in Mariacher's unit. She has experienced fairly equal treatment from her commander during her two years with ROTC. However she hasn't experienced equal treatment from her peers. "You're bound to be picked on, but that's just what happens," said Mariacher. It is common for women to adopt a *that's just what happens* attitude towards discrimination. Unfortunately, this is often because not much can be done.

## Adam Hookway ('17):

Hookway is a PFC (Private First Class) in the National Guard, and went to basic training over the summer. In his training cycle there weren't any females, but there were some in other units.

Hookway witnessed a lot of negative feeling towards women. "Many of the guys I was with gave them very little respect — making jokes about them doing push-ups and not trying hard, PMS jokes, etc. None of it was nice," said Hookway. "When [the guys] went to sick call, our drill sergeants would tell us to get Vagisil and tampons, and say that we were girls if we didn't meet the standard for exercises," said Hookway.



*Picture by US Military  
from Adam Hookway*

In basic training, women aren't required to achieve the same physical standards as their male counterparts. For example, when men were required to do 71 pushups, women were only required to do 42, which is the minimum for passing for male infantry. This caused a lot of controversy, and many took an issue with it.

Unfortunately, the leaders rarely did anything about it. "Our drill sergeants joined in on [the teasing] and started it, too. They knew they shouldn't and they would stop themselves every once in awhile, but these are guys who have gone across seas, killed many people, and don't give a sh\*t anymore. So they mostly do what they want," said Hookway.

# THE MILITARY



*Picture by US Military from Charlene Steele*

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“It was kind of a ‘good ol’ boys club’ when I was in ... They thought I was the cute lieutenant in the headquarters company.”

~

## **Charlene Steele:**

As stated in the beginning, Steele was in the Army on active duty from 1988 to ‘91. During this time, she was a communications lieutenant. Steele joined not for a love of the military lifestyle, but instead chose to enlist when she ran out of money halfway through college. “I had to find a way to complete my education. The ROTC people kept sending me stuff, and then one day I thought maybe I’ll go over and talk to them.”

In Steele’s company, there were no other female officers. “The military was structured different back then. I was in a field artillery unit which was all male. There was only one job that a female could have, which was a communication platoon leader, and that’s the job that I had,” said Steele.

Being the only female officer had its struggles. Steele often felt as though her superiors would act “fatherly” towards her, and that she wasn’t treated with proper respect. “It was kind of a ‘good ol’ boys club’ when I was in ... They thought I was the cute lieutenant in the headquarters company,” said Steele. “They would almost smile and laugh at me when I would try to be really serious, and try to do my role as a communications platoon leader.”

Steele found that even in the military, she couldn’t escape the idea that women are the caretakers and homemakers. “There were definitely rules when it came to doing extra activities. Women would be tasked more than men for tasks such as if there was an event to be planned ... but if there was some kind of trip where we’d be exploring military history or something like that, it tended to go to the male. I was more of the domestic one who had to take care of things,” said Steele.

Steele never experienced anything outwardly discriminatory, and therefore there wasn’t much she could do about how people acted. She just kept doing her job.

Although there can be many additional hardships for women who want to go into the military, most agree that overall there is more to gain.

Mariacher believes she has greatly benefited from the ROTC program. “I’ve noticed, and even my family has noticed me become more confident in who I am ... I finally found my thing,” said Mariacher.

The military offers a unique opportunity for both men and women to challenge yourself and push you to your limits.

Steele believes going into the military is one of the best things she’s ever done with her life. “It’s a wonderful experience ... You don’t know what you can do until you actually do it,” said Steele, “It’s a nontraditional thing that women will go in the military, especially up here in the north,” said Steele. “The [military] needs intelligent smart women to be part of the team.”

Women will feel motivated to join the military if they don’t have to worry about being treated fairly. Recognizing that the treatment of women in the military is unfair is the first step. The next step is to educate others. As more people that get involved and take a stand, further progress can be made.

This is a real issue, and women should be able to have the freedom to choose what they want to do in life without having to worry that their gender may hold them back.

-Lauren Quest

# You Make Your Own What?

Andrea Drake struts into the trigonometry room and every head turns. The class locks their eyes on her magnificently yellow skirt with a large bow attached to the waist band.

“Where did you get that skirt?!” a student from the back exclaims.

“I made it myself!” replies Drake. The whole class is in awe knowing she creates her clothes herself! How does she do it?

Self produced items are becoming a unique hobby throughout the Oyster River community. Whether it is sewing your own clothes, crafting your own pens, or throwing your own pottery, the possibilities are endless. Students and teachers alike have found ways to be more sustainable, save money, and have fun by incorporating their passions into their work. Andrea Drake, Hunter Grieve ('17), and Shauna Horsley are three key people who have been enjoying some of these activities.

## Andrea Drake

Drake began sewing and quilting in elementary school, a passion derived from her mother who has pursued this hobby much of her life. Some of the items Drake creates consist of quilts, wall hangings, table runners, cloth napkins, and bags. She is inspired by finding unique designs that she can turn into her own clothes, and by her mother who sewed her clothes that she treasured as a child. Now that Drake is a mother, she is “inspired to push and develop my skills so that I can hopefully pass such keepsakes and skills along to my daughter.”

Drake performs this activity simply for the joy and relaxation it brings her. “I can watch my daughter play nearby in her play area, listen to an audiobook or podcast, or just decompress from a hectic week,” explained Drake.

She has become more confident about her pieces, wearing them to school on a regular basis where she always receives loads of compliments. This confidence has pushed her to sew items for her daughter, “even her dress for her first school picture last fall!” Drake proudly exclaimed.

Drake believes it is more economical to create your own clothes rather than buying them from the store. She explained that the downside to sewing and quilting is that once all the materials are purchased and you have your finished project, the cost savings may not be cheaper than buying the clothes premade. Although a huge benefit of making your own clothes, or items in general, is the pride and expression you can have when the product is finished. “I also really love finding fun and unique fabrics and creating something so that I can enjoy the designs, have a one-of-a-kind item, and express my personality more than what can usually be found off a rack,” she said. Drake is currently working up the courage to make herself a coat for the upcoming winter.



“I think there is a lot of satisfaction in making something yourself and realizing that you can. I think you can take pride in that too, when you share them with other people.”



# Hunter Grieve

Grieve ('17), a former student at ORHS, began crafting pens when he took part in the woodshop class in high school. Before producing pens or other wooden items, he plans the layout on paper. Woodworking is mostly measuring and cutting, and often times you can find plans and layouts online. "There are also several maker-spaces around the region where volunteers can help you complete woodworking projects," Grieve explained.

What inspires Grieve is the ability of customization he has when woodworking. When turning a pen, he can choose between what woods to use and decide how to cut them into specific designs of his liking. Rarely can you get this experience when buying premade items from the store. Grieve believes, "the experience of making something is also more gratifying than simply buying it from the

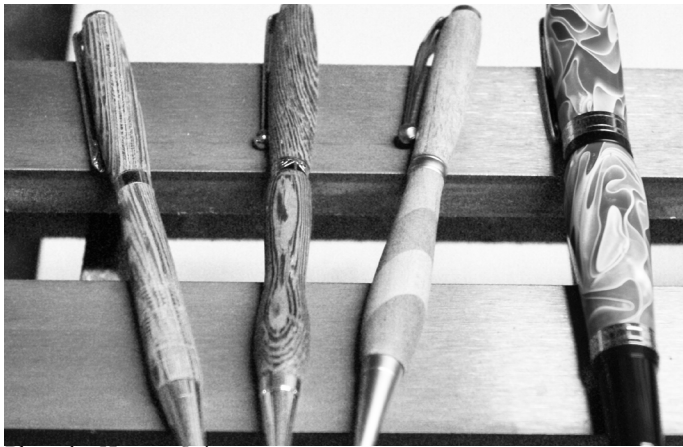


Photo by Hunter Grieve

# Shauna Horsley

Horsley tried drawing and painting classes in high school, but never connected with it the way she did when she discovered pottery. "I started doing pottery when I was in high school, and it was just something I fell in love with." She would spend her free time in school at the pottery studio and it became a hobby for her.



Photo by Shauna Horsley

Horsley lost that hobby during her college and adult years, and then got back into it when her husband surprised her with a gift. The Mill Pond Center was closing and they were getting rid of their pottery wheels. Horsley's husband picked one up and brought it home for her, which inspired Horsley to revive that hobby. She now has a pottery studio in her home!

store." Grieve appreciates the simplicity of turning pens and that they can be sold for a good profit. "A well made fountain pen, with a smooth finish, high quality materials, and patterns, can make a profit of over a hundred dollars."

Grieve explained that buying materials to create things is much less costly than buying them premade. A knowledgeable woodworker can find good prices on cull lumber goods, and intelligibly cut the wood down. For example, "in Ms. Cathey's room, there is a Sanshin Guitar made from pallet straps (a piece of scrap wood used to secure lumber) and cull cedar siding which I bought in 12 foot lengths for 2 bucks a piece."



Photo from Shauna Horsley

The studio consists of the basic requirements for making pottery such as a sink, kiln, wheel, wedging clay, different glazes, and little tools she needs to add designs or touch up the pottery.

Horsley throws pottery for her own creative outlet, and does not pay much attention to the cost. She rarely sells her pottery, but enjoys giving it away for gifts. She appreciates knowing the origin of where the items she has come from, a benefit of producing self-made items. Horsley encourages people to try something new and stretch yourself to find a hobby where you make your own things. "I think there is a lot of satisfaction in making something yourself and realizing that you can. I think you can take pride in that too, when you share them with other people," Horsley concluded.

The major benefits of producing your own items is the relaxation, pride, and gratification it can bring you. In some situations, the cost is less and it is more sustainable than buying the item premade from a store. In other scenarios, the price is relatively the same and it may not be more sustainable than the store item, and the main purpose of making it is simply for the joy it brings you. Try to find hobbies derived from your passions and focus more on the reward it can bring you mentally, and less on the profit it could bring you.

~Aliyah Murphy

# Nate the Techie

"I've been working professionally for four years, doing theatre for seven, and causing chaos for, well, seventeen years," said Nate Sullivan ('18).

Sullivan recently graduated a semester early from Oyster River High School to pursue his dream of a career in technical theatre. For the past 10 years, he has made a lasting impression on the Oyster River community through his work with concerts, musicals, plays, and special events.

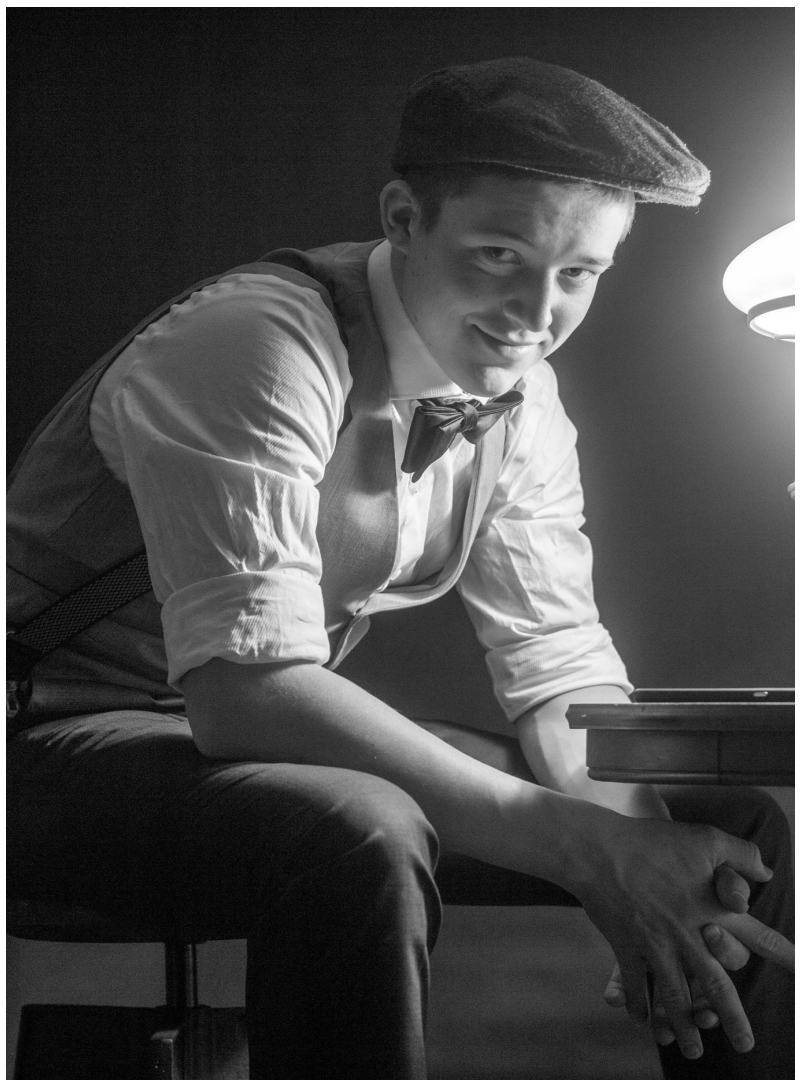
From a young age, it was clear that Sullivan had an interest in the technical side of putting on a production. "I used to snuggle with extension cords, instead of teddy bears. My parents would have to take them away so I wouldn't strangle myself," said Sullivan. "You know when you're little, and you put on a show in your basement? So, I built a full theatre in my basement. Complete with a full sound booth, lighting booth, and all the cables ran up through the ceiling." Along with having an interest in it, Sullivan was good at it. Putting all these pieces together came naturally to him.

As Sullivan got older, he wanted to expand his knowledge and skills to outside his basement. His mother suggested he use this interest and get involved at school. "Fourth grade, I learned how to play the sax. I wanted to be in Jazz Band, only because I wanted to run sound," said Sullivan. Once he got into the band, he never touched his sax again. You would find Sullivan right behind the sound booth or running around with bags of cables.

Around this same time, Sullivan had a babysitter who was a part of a theatre group. Hearing her talk about all the behind the scenes work got Sullivan interested to try something new.

*"My babysitter was part of a theatre group, and she got my sister into it. I wanted to do the tech stuff, but I was flying to my grandfather's house and wouldn't get back until the last night of tech week. I was in the airport about to board the plane [back home], and I called my mom to check in. She told me that the theater desperately needed more tech people, and I was leaving right from the airport and heading to the theater. So, I landed, and within thirty minutes, I was headed from Boston to a theater in Exeter to run spots [spot lights]. I got there, quickly learned how to run the spots, which were taller than me, and fell in love with it."*

This initial experience got Sullivan more involved with this specific theater. "After running spots for the first show, the company re-



ally wanted me to try acting. I was against it, wanting to do the tech side," Sullivan said. "But they convinced me to audition for Oliver. I got Oliver. I did that show, but then went right back to tech." Even though Sullivan has only acted for a few productions, that experience has allowed him to better understand the actors he now works with every day.

Sullivan worked at this theater for a while, trying out all the different positions that technical theatre had to offer. "By eighth grade, I had assistant director, technical director, lighting designer, scenic designer, audio designer, audio engineer, and teaching everybody else how to run the equipment, all under my belt." It didn't take long for Sullivan to become completely hooked on being behind the scenes of running a show.

Entering high school, Sullivan got involved with the ORHS Theatre Department. "Em McCarten ('15), the stage manager my freshman year, needed a spot operator, which I could do with my toes in my sleep," explained Sullivan. "She and I dragged one of the spots out of the auditorium and programmed the whole thing in the MPR." This first interaction got Sullivan involved with the entire department. The first show Sullivan did at ORHS was the winter one act, *I Don't Wanna Talk About It*, his freshman year. The night of the performance, he had to manually reprogram all the lights in just a half hour. "It was flawless," he added.

Sullivan was invited back to run a spot light for the spring musical, *FAME*, which he did, but he was looking for something more. Doing spots for *FAME*, Sullivan met Rachel Neubauer, who was running sound for the show. She hired him for Prescott Park that summer, where they put on *Peter Pan*. "Fourteen year old me was in charge of flying Michael and Jane during the show. And I was in charge of taking down all the flight equipment every night."

*"There was the 'casual' time when I was teaching someone the flight track at Prescott Park. And he knew how to fly, but he stepped back off the stage*



*"I come with a cocky attitude. I do everything 100 percent, and I know I do it because it's the only way to convince people that a 16 year old is qualified enough to run their entire theater."*

during the show, and the character Michael proceeded to fly almost into the trust system above. He was launched into it. I was immediately thrown the flight lines without having gloves on, so I had a large panic attack on whether I was going to rug burn my hands super bad. We finally got Michael safely back on the ground when the scene was over, and I looked at the other guy and he looked at me. We looked over at our assistant stage manager, and she went 'Nate's flying for the rest of the show.' And I just laughed."

As a fourteen year old, Sullivan was given a lot of responsibilities, more than some adults. Sullivan believes this is because, "I'm a cocky and arrogant son of a b\*tch. I make it seem like I know what I'm doing even when I don't, and then I just figure out a way to do it." This attitude has landed Sullivan a lot of opportunities and jobs over the years.

Last summer, Sullivan worked at Interlakes Summer Theatre where he was hired as their Technical Director. "I was working with my boss this summer, and we had a good laugh, because he didn't know who I was until my first day; he hadn't been the one to hire me. He was terrified when he heard a 16 year old had been hired to basically be the boss of the theater." Sullivan was in charge of everything that was going on behind the scenes for every show that entire summer. He worked on sound, lighting, sets, and leadership for the rest of the crew. "The very first day when I showed up, I was mad because the theater wasn't prepared for me to start building. I think that's when my boss knew I was different," Sullivan added.

"I come with a cocky attitude. I do everything 100 percent, and I know I do it because it's the only way to convince people that a 16 year old is qualified enough to run their entire theater."

At Interlakes Summer Theatre, it was a very fast paced schedule. Like most summer theatres, a lot of shows are crammed into a very small amount of time. This is a challenge for actors and crew to be able to get everything ready in time for the next production. "At Interlakes, we got done with *South Pacific*, we stripped the entire set down Sunday night until 3am. We were back in the theater at 8am the next day. We put the new set up, which was *Cats*. We hung and focused all the lights, programmed all the lights, all while the cast had their day off. Then, Tuesday was a full tech. Actors were called at 11[am], so I got there at 8 and programmed all the lights and sound. At 11, we ran the rehearsal, and put on the show on Wednesday. We had one day of tech," Sullivan said.

Sullivan pointed out that although this schedule can make for some long, tiring nights, it also makes for some great friendships. "Everyone is pouring everything they've got into the shows, which makes for some very awkward moments, but also some very close knit groups. The current group I'm part of [Interlakes] got so close because every breathing moment was spent together," he said.

Spending every breathing moment doing theatre also allowed Sullivan to become very comfortable with the jobs he was doing. "The thing is, if I didn't feel like programming everything, I would just run the show live and hope for the best. Which isn't the worst thing I've ever done. I ran *South Pacific* and *Gypsy* live, which once I memorized the script, wasn't a problem. It takes me about two days to memorize a script," explained Sullivan.

Sullivan has been fortunate enough to experience many different positions of technical theatre. Although he's done it all, he has a clear favorite. "Above everything I've done, I like being TD [Technical Director] because I get to be in charge. I get to do everything from building sets when people are behind schedule and don't know how to do it, to running sound when the person doesn't show up, to programming lights, and running last minute shows."


Specifically with theatre, Sullivan loves the thrill of working with a live audience. There is no way to go back and fix a mistake. "Theatre isn't like the movies where you have a million shots. You get one shot a night. You can shoot that to the moon and it will be amazing, or you can blow it up on the launch pad. Either way, you have a new chance the next night," said Sullivan. There have been many instances where Sullivan has had to act immediately on a situation.

"We were in the middle of *Cats*, second song of the show, and we hear a lightning crack happen. About five seconds later, my entire sound system shuts down. So, there was no sound coming anywhere. You could just hear the band in the back room. It took me five minutes; I'm very proud of it. From the second the sound went out, to go backstage and check with everyone, get back to my spot, reset the entire sound system, reload the show, check the show, and then run the show again."

Since entering high school, Sullivan has done roughly 30 full productions, 60 events, and 80 concerts, many of them being ORHS. No matter the event, he's probably been there, wearing all black, in the back of the room, running the show.

"What's next for Nate the techie? Well, I've graduated early. I haven't officially settled on anything yet. I've already booked five shows. I have three offers for full summer contracts. I will probably work for New England Mobile Audio doing shows, and I will probably private contract because I've now purchased my own full sound system. I will obviously be running shows for friends, and I will possibly be back for the school shows. The best thing is that I won't be in school."



*I have had the pleasure of working with Nate since 7th grade in jazz band. There is something unique about him that I can't quite explain. People like Nate are very special and hard to come by. When working with Nate, you want to do well. You don't want to disappoint him. The second you see Nate in his element, the passion is pouring from him. You can see how much he loves it, even if he doesn't always say it. I know all of us here at ORHS are going to miss Nate, but we wish the best for him and his future. Nate is going places; I have no doubt. So, good luck, Nate, and don't forget about us when you make it big!* 

-Skylar Hamilton  
Title photo by Elise Sullivan



# Journey to a Zero Waste Life

*"I realized I could make a real, tangible difference, even if it was a small one."*



As a senior in college, Samantha White felt like she wasn't making a difference. Despite her enthusiasm for recycling, she couldn't help but notice the trash that seemingly built up around her. But one click on a link about zero waste living changed everything.

In April of 2015, White began her journey into zero waste living and has continued passionately ever since. She currently lives in New Hampshire and maintains a blog titled *livingwastefree* that follows her lifestyle and has over 25,000 followers on Instagram. Though the direct definition of zero waste living is right in the name, a lifestyle that produces no waste, White says that her personal interpretation of the lifestyle is, "to create as little trash in my own life as possible."

The larger goal of zero waste living is to reduce the amount of trash in the first place, and then reinventing the trash that is inevitably used. Even though recycling is important, it is not the answer to all problems, but it can be a great first step towards a waste free lifestyle. "I once thought that recycling was what would save the planet. After reducing the waste I was creating, I began to look into recycling a bit more. I realized that it's a fantastic idea, but it's a not a fix," notes White.

When White first changed her lifestyle, the hardest thing was allowing herself to create some trash and not making her feel bad for the trash she did create. She realized pretty quickly that, "trash happens," and if she spent so much time driving herself insane with the smallest wrapper, she was missing the big picture.

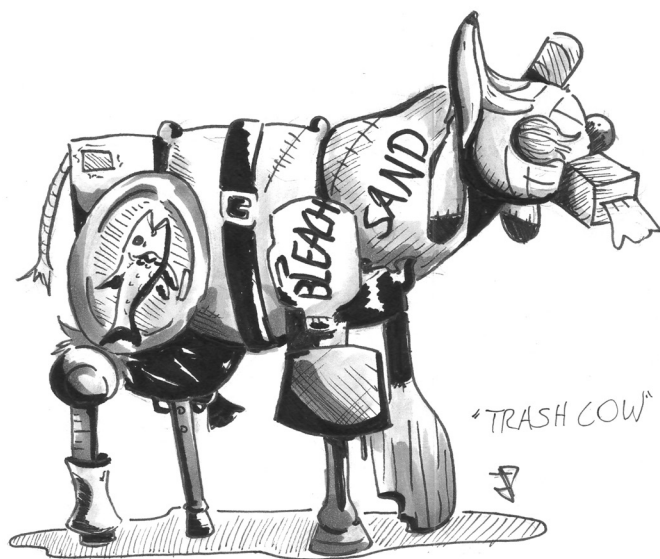
"What drew me in was the realization that there was another way to live. I could actually be proactive in reducing the amount of trash I was creating instead of thoughtlessly consuming and then recycling what I had left over," she adds.

There are numerous ways to cut down on the trash created, and White makes every effort to do so, but she still worries about, "what people think when I bring in my own container to a restaurant or when I won't accept the disposable plates/utensils/napkins at a

potluck."

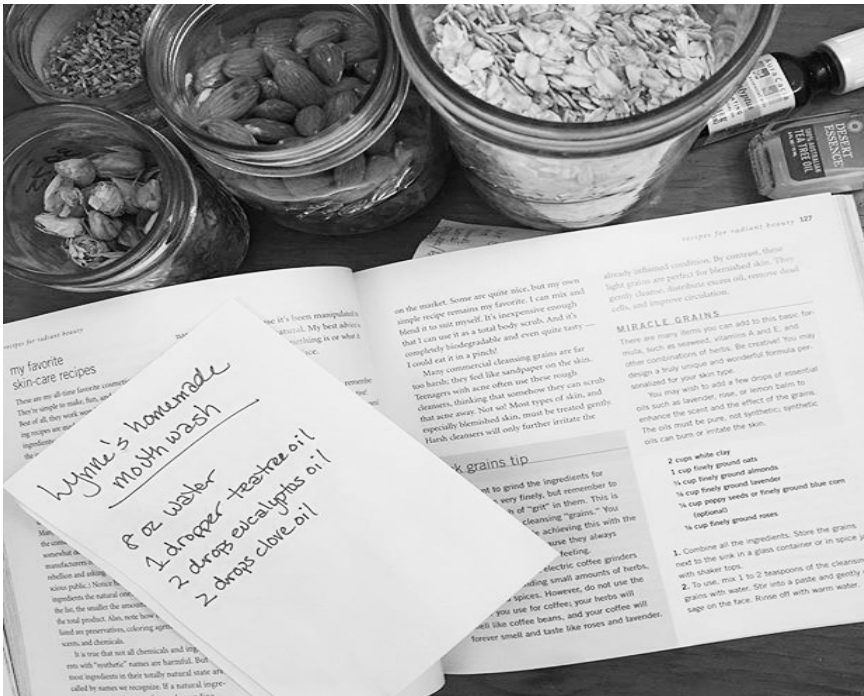
Now, I'm sure the question in everyone's head is: how much trash does she create? When first interviewing White, I asked the same question. Many bloggers who document their zero waste living and like to measure their progress will put all the trash they create in a jar. When she first began, White says, "I tried to do the same. It quickly became apparent to me that it was causing me stress, so I ditched the trash jar." Now she uses a small trash can, about 2 quarts in size, that fills up every month or two.

An online article from the United States Environmental Protection Agency states that the average American discards about 4 pounds of trash every day, which would add up to almost 1,500 pounds in a year - that's the size of an adult cow!



Art by Ronnie R

*“There is a crazy amount of unnecessary trash and plastic being created, consumed, and thrown away every minute, and every day that I do my best to not contribute to that cycle is a day I feel as though I have done something positive. And that feeling of positivity and hope is what makes this lifestyle so important to me.”*




What might seem like a challenge to some people is actually White's favorite part of the job: grocery shopping. "To buy groceries, I bring in my own glass jars and cloth bags to fill up with unpackaged bulk goods like honey, flour, and granola." She additionally skips the plastic bags for her veggies and fruits, and will place them directly in bags she brought with her. These steps completely eliminate any wasteful packaging, but not every store is like those that White visits.

"Zero waste grocery shopping can seem daunting, but if you find a good store that has unpackaged produce and bulk bins it's easy. And even if you can't find a store with bulk bins, you can always go for the least packaged option available." Select an item packaged in a easy-to-be recycled container, like cardboard, than non recyclable items, like plastic bags. "Start small and don't stress about how much trash you create. Zero waste is all about progress not perfection," says White.

Zero waste living is one great way to reduce the amount of trash produced and can help to make a small difference in a very big world. White suggests to start with baby steps. Try using a reusable water bottle instead of a plastic one, or use reusable bags at the grocery store. Once you make these things a habit, "then look in your trash can, and see what other switches you can easily make."

The impact one person can make by living waste free truly astounds me, but it can be hard sustaining a lifestyle without anyone going through the same situations. Try getting your friends involved too. "It's always fun when a friend texts me a photo of them choosing reusable items over disposable ones," says White.

Another resource White created was her blog, which she began in 2015 to keep herself accountable and organized. "I mostly do blogging for my own enjoyment, and as a way to keep all of my recipes and DIY instructions in one place."

If you are interested in living waste free and want more information from White, check out her blog at <https://livingwastefree.com/>, follow her instagram (livingwastefree) and subscribe to her YouTube channel (livingwastefree). 

## Easy Steps to Reduce Trash in Your Life

(for more information or tips, check out her blog at [livingwastefree.com](http://livingwastefree.com))

### Choose cloth over paper products

Every orange juice soaked wad of paper towel makes a difference. Cloth napkins are fairly inexpensive and can add festivities to your home. According to an article titled "Banish the Paper Towel," from The Energy Co-Op, 13 billion pounds of paper towels are used each year. One easy change in your home can help reduce that number.

## BYOC

### Bring Your Own Container

Whether you're using the containers for bulk items, like White does when grocery shopping, or for extra food at a restaurant, bringing your own container can make a small but impactful difference. White suggests bringing a stainless steel container and a mason jar wherever you go.

### Use reusable items or just say no.

An article from Carry Your Cup says that Americans produce, "25 billion styrofoam coffee cups every year, and 2.5 million plastic beverage bottles every hour." By simply choosing to bring your own reusable water bottle or refusing a styrofoam coffee cup, you can cut down on the amount of waste we produce as a nation, each year.

- Jordan Zercher

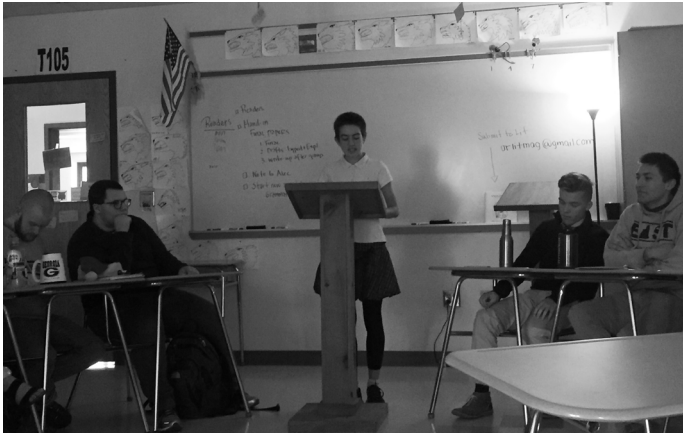
Photos by Samantha White



# 4 Classes You Should Take Before You Graduate

The 161 class long program of studies offered at Oyster River High School can be awfully daunting. After freshman and sophomore year, most students have completed the majority of their required classes. However, you still have credits to fill and aren't sure what classes you should take to fill them. After talking to upperclassmen, I compiled a list of classes that they recommend taking before you graduate.

## 1. Debate and Persuasion



Danielle Slavin ('18) presents her speech on Trump's proposal to send manned missions to Mars.

Whether you are someone who loves public speaking or dreads it, you should take Debate and Persuasion. In this semester long, communications class, students study the three main types of debates: standard, cross examination, and Lincoln-Douglas. You learn how to formulate a compelling argument, find strong research, and determine the sources that you use. "[The structure] gets people used to speaking in public, which is something we don't do a lot unless we're forced to do it. The more you do it, the more comfortable you become in it," said Kara Sullivan, who has been teaching Debate and Persuasion for 17 years. Emily Allyson ('18) took debate her junior year and added that, "for college interviews, it's been really helpful."

Unlike many classes at ORHS, the students have a lot of say in which topics they focus on. Students create a topic proposal, vote on which 2-3 topics the class will debate, then choose which topic they would personally like to research. It is up to the individuals of the group to decide which side they would like to defend. "We usually get to do something that we are interested in, which makes it exciting," said Allyson. She even went as far to say, "you run the class a little bit."

Sullivan recommends the class to upperclassmen because, "it can be a little intimidating." Yet, she fully believes that, "anybody can take this class." Debate and Persuasion has proven to be such a popular course that Debate Club was added as an extracurricular activity in the fall of 2017. "Students get comfortable with public speaking, and then the class ends. [Debate Club] gives them a new venue to do that in," explained Sullivan. Whether you are looking to gain confidence in public speaking, already love it, or are simply looking to fulfill your communications credit, this is a great class which you will leave with improved public speaking skills!

## 2. Psychology

Psychology is social studies elective that dives deeper than the grade. In this class, students look at everything from notable psychologists through history to why teenagers are more likely to abuse drugs. Demetrius Phofolos ('19) said that many of the topics covered in Psychology, "you don't normally address, but you have to address in this class." Brian Zottoli has taught Psychology for four years at ORHS and described the class as, "not hard, but challenging. It makes you think about yourself and how you interact with these different things."

Although Zottoli admits it's not too difficult to get a good grade in the class, he explained, "if you're taking it just for a grade, you're missing the boat. The knowledge and how you apply the knowledge is key." The takeaway from this class is debatably some of the most beneficial knowledge you can obtain from a class at ORHS. Phofolos explained, "it's going to be important for the rest of our lives. It's how people operate, and it helps with dealing with social scenarios."

Stress, and how you manage it, is a large topic covered in Psychology. Although a major issue for students at Oyster River High School, it is not a topic covered in many classes. "It's less about a textbook and more about your personal life," said Phofolos. It's easy to apply the class to your own personal life because, "Mr. Zottoli is good at coming from the perspective of a teenager, and not the perspective of a teacher. He gets on your level and it feels like you can open your mind up more to him," explained Phofolos. Zottoli says that he tries to make the class very "teenaged." When searching for articles for the class to read, he looks for ones that "are really connected to where students are developmentally and behaviorally." The timing as to when a student should take Psychology can be tricky according to Zottoli. Underclassmen often times are not ready for the information yet because it's not very applicable to their lives. If taken junior or senior year, Running Start credit is available. However, many upperclassmen wish they had known the information earlier. Overall, if you're someone who's looking for a better understanding of yourself and others, you should take Psychology.



Brian Zottoli and his Psychology discuss the aging process.

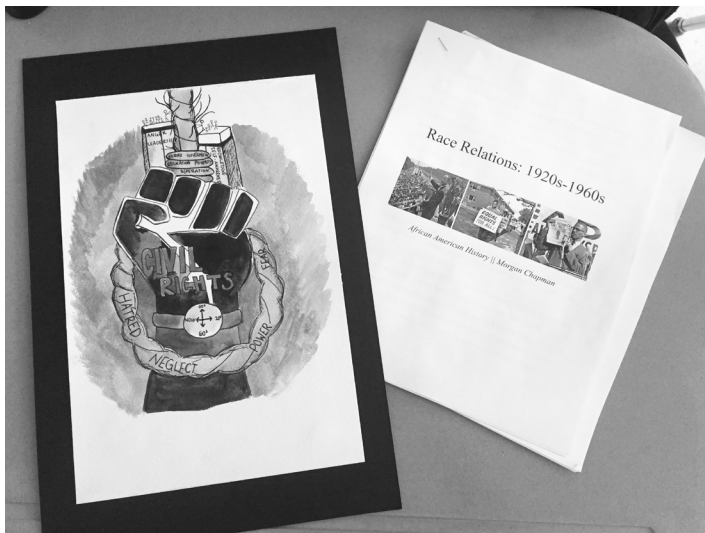


## 4. African American History

It's no secret; Oyster River High School is not a very racially diverse community. Although not as valuable as actually experiencing diversity, African American Studies is a beneficial class for all students. Introduced in 2016, it counts as a US history credit and has been taught by both Brian Zottoli and Jaclyn Jensen. Students learn about all events leading up to the present, starting with slavery. The course reveals the truth behind Rosa Parks and looks further in depth at the KKK and hate crimes throughout our past. "There's a lot of history that has been purposely hidden through decades prior and trying to uncover that with students is really rewarding and fascinating," said Jensen. Many of the topics covered in this class aren't discussed in other history classes. Jensen explained, "it was really fun for me as a teacher to hear students say 'oh I've never heard about this,' or 'I can't believe I've never heard about this.'"

Although there are some tough topics discussed in this class, Jensen tries her best to find a balance between African American achievements and the harsh reality of the actions of White Americans. "It can make students feel uncomfortable. It can make me feel uncomfortable because these are really difficult topics," said Jensen. She adds, "when you feel uncomfortable is when you have an opportunity to learn more and grow." This course is definitely an eye opener. As Jessie Mulligan ('18) put it, "this class opens your mind up to new ideas, new perspectives, and is a huge opportunity to self reflect."

Mulligan believes she is better at identifying the racial issues our nation is still combating today after taking African American Studies. This growth is what the class strives to create. According to Jensen, "the source of social ills and social conflict is ignorance...Studies have shown that Americans with a more comprehensive understanding of American history have fewer racial biases and less racist views." If you want to better yourself as a person and learn the truth behind our nation's history, you should definitely take African American Studies.



Morgan Chapman's ('20) project on race relations.

## 3. Nutrition



Jackson Deely ('20) and Sidonio LaBelle ('20) make whole wheat spaghetti.

Introduced in the fall of 2017, Nutrition is a new but popular class offered at ORHS. It is one of the most practical electives you can enroll in. Nick Ricciardi, Nutrition teacher, said Nutrition is an important course at ORHS because, "when we don't offer a class like this, we set up kids to live their life eating McDonalds and Subway because they just don't know what are good options, and they don't know how to feed themselves in a healthy way." In this class you learn about nutrients, with an emphasis on macronutrients (carbohydrates, fats and proteins,) their benefits, and how to incorporate them into meals you make.

The course is focused on the skills you take away rather than the information you can memorize. "You're learning it, and then doing it, whereas many classes you're just learning about it then expected to take a test on it," explained Ben Buteau ('18.) This is a hands-on class, where students are in the kitchen cooking at least two days a week. "All the classes I teach are as practical as I can make them," said Ricciardi. He strongly encourages students to take this class, stating, "everybody has to know at some point how to feed themselves, so I think it's important for everybody at this school." In addition, Ricciardi doesn't assign homework or give tests. This elective is a low-stress class in which you can learn and take away a lot of valuable information.



This is a very simplified list of great classes at Oyster River High School. There are many other courses offered that are arguably just as beneficial. These featured classes are some of the most popular ones for various reasons. Some are low stress while other require more work. Yet, they all offer valuable knowledge outside of the classroom. If you are in search of a credit to fill or looking to learn something new, make sure you check out these classes!

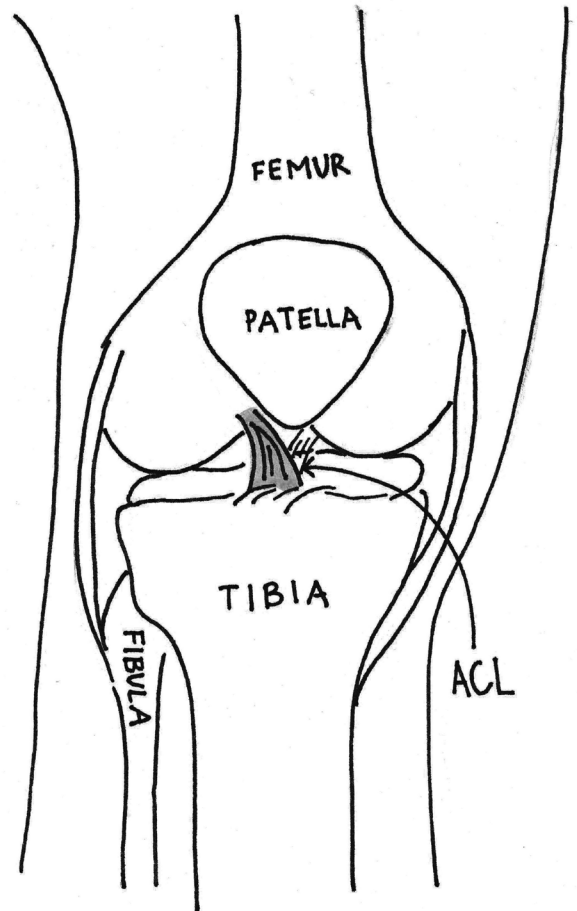
-Lydia Hoffman

# ACL Injury: What is it, Really?

I didn't take much notice when the girl in my math class came in with a full leg brace and crutches. Perhaps I took a second glance at the girl in my English class who came in outfitted in the same paraphernalia. Yet as I strode past the line of high school girls waiting for the elevator, all suited up in matching braces, I paused. Was this some sort of new fashion? I didn't figure it out until I became one of the elevator-riding girls, sporting the same bulky leg brace as the rest. Surprisingly enough, it is not some sort of new fashion. For many of these high school athletes, they are recovering from an ACL tear.

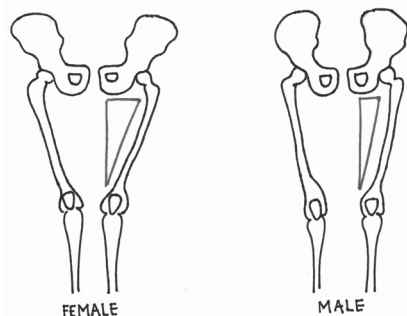
## What is it?

While many of us have heard the term "torn ACL," the majority of people have no idea what it actually means. It's something in your knee... right? With between 100,000 and 200,000 cases of ACL tears in the United States each year (1)\*, many of whom are high school students, one would think we would be more familiar with the injury. ACL is the acronym for Anterior Cruciate Ligament. It is located in the middle of the knee, and it is one of four ligaments connecting the femur (thigh bone) with the tibia (shin bone). The ACL prevents the tibia from sliding out in front of the femur (2)\*. Contrary to popular belief, most ACL injuries occur in a no-contact situation. Only 30% of cases involve contact (3)\*. A tear typically occurs when the knee is locked and the body changes directions or pivots suddenly.



## Female Frequency

So, back to those high school athletes with the leg braces. If we take a moment and look for the common denominator, what can we determine? It appears that for the most part, these student athletes are all, well, female. As it turns out, as females, we are five times more likely to rupture our ACLs than our male counterparts (3)\*. I am not saying that it cannot happen to men; guys can tear their ACLs too — in fact, football is the leading sport for ACL injuries. The fact is, if you were born a female, you were predisposed to be more susceptible to ACL injury. And soccer is the most common sport for these injuries. When women reach puberty, the bones in their pelvis begin to grow, causing the hips to widen to allow for the woman to give birth to a child. A wider pelvis in turn increases what is known as the Q angle. The Q angle is measured between two lines. One that starts from the bony protrusion on the side of the pelvis (anterior superior iliac spine) and travels to the center of the patella, and the other runs from the top of the tibia up through the center of the patella. The wider the Q



angle, the more "turned in" a person's legs are. Due to this, females' legs from the knees to waist form a V, while men's tend to be straighter. This causes more stress to be placed on the knees while engaging in certain activities.

There is up and coming research that shows that menstruating females are even more likely to tear their ACL — up to eight times more likely than other people (4)\*. There is not full agreement as to whether the most susceptible time is during ovulation or pre-ovulation, but research has concluded that the rising and falling levels of certain hormones may be the explanation. During menstruation, these hormones cause the ligaments to become more flexible, and less sturdy, leaving them more prone to ruptures.

It is common for females to have a muscle imbalance. Our quadriceps tend to be much stronger than their hamstrings. Because the quadriceps are the muscles responsible for straightening the leg, females tend to perform movements with straighter, more rigid legs. When running and jumping, pressure is placed on the soles of the feet, and there is less bend in the knees, and therefore less give, when landing.

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## Recovery

So, you've torn your ACL. What's next? While 77% of all ACL injuries result in surgery (5)\*, it is not the only option. If the injured person does not plan on continuing to participate in any form of activity that poses heavy stress on the knee, doctors may suggest refraining from surgery. It is common for older people, who are comfortable with removing skiing, contact sports, and other strenuous activities from their lives, to choose not to undergo surgery. The body does not need the ACL to perform daily tasks; other ligaments and muscles are able to compensate. It is in assisting the fast, side-to-side movement that the ACL is so crucial. For the majority of us who wish to continue these activities in some way, surgery is the logical option.

To the general public, it may appear that we are completely healed after a few weeks — we're off crutches, we lose the brace, we're walking around like everyone else. But recovery lasts much, much longer. For a typical tear, physical therapy begins directly following surgery. Here, we focus primarily on regaining flexibility. After 2-3 months, we are moved from physical therapy to a more rigorous training regimen, involving more weight bearing exercises, where we begin to strengthen the surrounding muscles. It takes at least four months before we are allowed to run in a straight line on even surface, and no less than six months before we are able fully participate in sports. Sure, six months may seem like a small period of time in relation to our lives, but it can be a major burden when it occurs during our four years of high school.



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## Mental Struggle

"I tore my ACL."

Customary Reaction: Slight head tilt, raised eyebrows, a slight murmur of "Oh, I'm so sorry..." optional pat on the upper arm, shoulder, or hand. But it is hard for an outsider to see, to understand.

Why me?

Yes, it could be worse. The physical recovery process is only six months, and in the grand scheme of things, that's not such a long time. But to be frank, the physical pain is not the most challenging part. Your knee stops hurting — great! Yet you're still on the sideline, and the rest of the world doesn't wait. Your friends, teammates, and family members continue about their lives, running and jumping and competing, reminding you of all that you are unable to do. As high school athletes, we take pride in our strength, in our ability to perform at our best. Our confidence and self-esteem is often directly correlated

with our performance on the field, the court, the slopes, etc. In a matter of seconds, you can go from feeling unstoppable on the field to laying in a heap, unable to put weight on your leg. Your body, the one reliable constant in your life, the tank that pushed you and endured all those workouts and practices, suddenly wasn't good enough. It had let you down. And that's not something that's easy to move past.

It is finally time to return to the field, yet it isn't the same. You can't help but notice everyone else's knees as they make tackles, take shots, turn, pivot. It makes you nervous. How is it possible that less than a year ago, you felt sturdy on your two legs, confident in your movements and tackles. But it gets better. With injury comes adversity, and sometimes you just have to take a leap. Get out on that field, take shots, go in for tackles. You are strong. We are strong. And we deserve to play with the same heart and passion as before. **M**

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### \*Footnote:

The following sources were used to support the information presented in this article. There is more to this topic than was included in this piece; to learn more about ACL injury and recovery, check out the following:

1. University of Colorado Denver - CU Sports Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation - Maria Osborne
2. MedLine Plus - ACL Injury
3. Orthopaedic Specialists of NC - Preventing ACL Tears
4. Dr. Michael Roizen, MD - ACL Tears during Menstruation
5. U.S. National Library of Medicine - ACL Injuries in High School Athletes

To read about personal accounts of local ACL injuries, scan the QR code to the right:





# Going the Distance

## *A profile on Olivia Lenk*



*Photo credit: Pam Lovejoy*

"She combines natural ability with a hard work ethic. Put those two things together in any field and good things are going to happen," says Coach Fergus Cullen, referring to sophomore standout Olivia Lenk.

Lenk runs varsity Cross Country at ORHS, competes in Irish Dance at Murray Academy in Exeter, and receives Highest Honors each quarter, all while making time to spend with friends and family. Lenk has become very good at managing each of these components of her life, and as a result she excels in each.

As one could imagine, participating in two full time sports while also managing school and extracurriculars can become difficult. Lenk would often-times have to go straight from a cross country practice to a dance rehearsal, and sometimes even from a cross country meet to a dance competition.

She described one particularly difficult instance, saying "going to MOC's was scary because I really wanted to qualify individually, so I had to be totally focused on running my best race and getting in the zone. When I did well and felt good about my race I was really happy and my body and my mind kind of wanted to relax, because I felt like I was done and the hard work was over. But then I had to change my focus to dance and my dance zone is way different than my running zone so it's a little tricky to stay 100% focused. But, I really want to do my best at both competitions so I just channel all my energy into one and then channel all my energy into the other sport. If I try and think about them at the same time I get way too overwhelmed and anxious and I don't perform well. After I do well at my dance competition then I feel really good because I was able to control my focus to perform my best." (end scene)

Lenk had an exceptional freshman cross country season, with times comparable to those of ORHS alumna Maegan Doody during her freshman season. In 2016, during Lenk's freshman season, she placed 14th at the Division 2 State Meet, with an impressive time of 19:46. A couple weeks later, at the Meet of Champions, Lenk placed 24th with a time of 18:56, which qualified her as an individual for New Englands. Lenk describes this as one of her proudest moments, saying, "I wasn't sure if I was going to make it since

I was seeded 29th, and the top 25 qualify. So I was really nervous because I had to pass people, and if I didn't then I wouldn't get to keep going. I ended up pulling through, which was exciting." Lenk went on to place 91st at New Englands to end her freshman season.

This past season, Lenk worked hard to improve her running, with big goals in mind. She placed 25th at the Division 2 State Meet, which wasn't as high as she had hoped, but she still qualified for the Meet of Champions. Lenk ran exceptionally well at Meet of Champs, missing her personal record by only 2 seconds, set on the same course last year. Cullen was also sure to note that, "her background in competitive Irish step dancing has made her very strong and tough as well. I watched one of her competitions earlier this year and these are no joke. They take as much out of a person as running an all-out mile does. The routines require stamina and strength and fitness as well as incredible coordination and speed."

Lenk began Irish Dance at a young age. She said, "I started when I was seven because my neighbor was in the same grade as me and we were really good friends. My parents worked a lot so after school I'd go to her house and then she did Irish dance, so I just went with her and I really wanted to try it." She has stuck with Irish Dance ever since, and is currently ranked in the top ten Irish Dancers in North America. She stated that her proudest accomplishment was winning the New England Regionals in 2015. She said, "that was super fun because I had been working really hard leading up to it, and I had been really close for a couple years, and it just all came together and then there was a parade of champions at the end." Lenk continued on to say, "I also went to Worlds three times and the last time I went I was 78th so that was really exciting." This year, Lenk has been having an exceptional season. She got 2nd place at the Harvest Time Feis in Massachusetts, and 1st place at the Lenihan Feis in Connecticut. She recently placed 10th at the North American Irish Dance Championships, and placed 9th in the regional competition in Connecticut.

Her dance coach, Anne MacRitchie, said, "Olivia's greatest strengths as a dancer includes her mindset. She is very serious about what

she is doing and listens closely to all the teachers. She loves to dance and compete, and is extremely committed to preparing for each major competition." Looking toward the future, MacRitchie hopes to see Lenk make the final round at the Worlds competition. She said, "this is a challenging goal but I know Olivia can do it!"

In addition to having supportive coaches, Lenk also talked about the importance of having supportive teammates, and was sure to note that she really appreciated having a group of people she could always count on, both in dance and cross country.

Audrey Malila has been a dance teammate of Lenk's for seven years. She said, "we became partners on our dance team and became amazing friends right away. We've been dancing together ever since." Malila has enjoyed all of her time dancing with Lenk, and recalled one particular memory that stood out to her. She said, "one of my favorites is when we travelled to Ireland together and stayed in a hotel room with our dance teacher. Even though nobody from our school did well the day we danced, the time we spent laughing, crying, and eating tons of junk food in the hotel room was worth the experience, as we were all in the same situation."

Malila speaks very highly of Lenk, saying, "I'm so grateful to have met Olivia. We have been to so many amazing places together and experienced it all - good times and bad! I've always strived to be like her whether through my dancing or person." She closed with, "as a teammate, Olivia is really supportive and encouraging. Even though we can be really competitive, at the end of the day we're always happy for each other and care more about our relationship than our placement."

On the running side of things, ORGXC teammate Sophie Sullivan has known Lenk since elementary school, and became close friends with her in middle school. She said, "when I was in 6th grade and she was in 7th, we ran the bagel [run] together and crossed the finish line holding hands and coming in first. We also ran together again when she was in 8th grade and I was in 7th seventh. She hadn't really run before that, but

I realized she was really fast." Sullivan agreed with Malila, saying, "one thing Olivia is really good at is including everyone on the team, and she is really nice and welcoming." Sullivan and Lenk will run two more seasons of cross country together before Lenk graduates. Sullivan is looking forward to making many new memories, and shared one of her favorites. She said, "I have a ton of great memories with her, but my favorite was probably when we drove down to Newport, Rhode Island to surf and swim in the huge waves from all the hurricanes two years ago. The waves were massive but it was so much fun. One thing I love about her is that she is always up for going on crazy adventures with me!"

Much like her dance and cross country teams, Lenk's family is very close-knit as well. Her mother, Megan Lenk, said, "I'm proud of Olivia's accomplishments and how hard she works to reach her goals. I've loved watching her progress in dance, and her time with the cross country team has been very exciting. I'm proud of the high standards she holds for her school work. I'm equally proud when I see her being a good friend, showing empathy, and cheering on and supporting others." She concluded with, "my goal for her would be that she choose a path that's balanced and rewarding, and one that makes her happy."

In the future, Lenk doesn't see herself realistically continuing with dance long-term, as she moves onto college. She hopes to pursue running in college, and mentioned that she feels it is a great way to make friends. She said, "I feel like that would be a good way, just like moving into high school, to move into college with a group of people. It would be fun to still work with a team and and push myself with other people."

Cullen closed with, "one of her challenges is that Olivia is good at many things and wants to excel at everything she does. At some point every person realizes they can't be excellent at all things they could do. They must prioritize and make choices." While her tasks and daily activities may change, Lenk's ability to manage and excel in so many different areas will undoubtedly be beneficial for her throughout her life. **M**

*"Her background in competitive Irish step dancing has made her very strong and tough as well. I watched one of her competitions earlier this year and these are no joke. They take as much out of a person as running an all-out mile does. The routines require stamina and strength and fitness as well as incredible coordination and speed."*



Photo Credit: Tim Krein



Photo Credit: Sadie Bucknam

-Anna Kate Munsey

# Crull Steps Away From ORHS Soccer



At the Oyster River Boys' Soccer banquet on November 21, Head Coach Charlie Crull officially announced his stepping down from the role after sixteen years within the program, including eleven years at the helm for varsity, compiling a record of 203-58-15 (W-L-D) in that time.

Only thirty-five, although Crull's accomplishments are ahead of his years, he doesn't feel like "retiring" from the position is a correct term, given his age. Although his commitment and passion for the sport and team didn't waver, his responsibilities as a father and vice president of a travel company became more time-consuming than ever during this year's season, forcing Crull to take a reduced role with the team. As Crull transitioned mid-season to a role where he only met with the team once or twice a week, assistant coach and former team captain Jake Bayer ('11) took over the traditional role as head coach.

"Just knowing that I was being pulled in too many different directions, I think this is something that I've known for a while, that it would come to an end," said Crull, who noted that his decision was impacted by a number of different commitments. "My priorities, just like I've always told my players, are family, work, then soccer. It would be family first and then soccer second if it was my passions, but it's not that way in terms of time." Between his job at 'Cruise & Tour' and raising his five-year-old son George with his wife Maria Rosi, an art teacher at ORHS, Crull felt he wasn't able to put as much work into the soccer program as he usually had. "I got about a quarter way into the season and I felt like I was already at the end of the season," said Crull, who credits his connection with his players as a motivation to continue doing all he could for the program. "I really wanted to see it through with this group of guys, for better or worse."

Bayer coached for five seasons with Crull, including this season when the two virtually swapped positions as Bayer became the interim head coach while Crull took on a lesser role. "Charlie's best qualities as a coach are that his own expectations that he would set onto himself made him always want to improve in how he would coach," said Bayer. "He was able to stress training habits because of the effort that he put in himself, and this set the expectations on the players' work rate."

In these five years, Bayer said that he was able to see Crull's personality in the many different relationships the two had; Crull was a not just a fellow coach, but a friend and mentor to Bayer, who noted that Crull's expertise in coaching was at a level that is rare to see in high school. "Charlie's organization and his really well practiced coaching tactics are some things that I feel a lot of coaches can learn from and can create an environment where you can get everybody on the same page," said Bayer.

Crull grew up in Wisconsin, where he played for Cedarburg Soccer Club in his youth as a goalkeeper before joining a state powerhouse called Bavarians Soccer Club outside of Milwaukee, which featured an abundance of players that went on to play collegiately and professionally. Crull then went on to play for the University of New Hampshire for one season before beginning coaching at Oyster River during his sophomore year at UNH. He coached at the reserve and junior varsity levels for five years before becoming the head coach of the varsity team.

Although Crull's legacy is now one of excellence and success, the

beginning of his career as varsity head coach was much more difficult, both personally and for the organization as a whole. "The biggest challenge was, after [former head coach] Tom Johnson had set a really strong foundation for the program, I didn't know exactly how to handle myself," he said. "At first I was a hard dictator, and then I was really soft, but I could never find an in-between style or a good comfort level for myself." With his difficulty finding a balanced personality, Crull also felt like the high standard of Oyster River soccer was slipping. "Charlie's legacy wasn't a perfect one," said Bayer. "He didn't come in and immediately create a standard of excellence that he carried through his entirety. I know that in his first few seasons, it was very much a struggle being in a program that always had attached to it a prestige and notoriety for its success that he was not able to replicate for a couple of seasons."

Crull admits that as he and the team struggled in his first few seasons in charge, he considered calling it quits. "Trying to figure out whether I was going to proceed was difficult for me," he said. Although he understood the commitment it would take to continue coaching in the program at this point, Crull's passion for the game of soccer inspired him to remain as head coach for Oyster River, where the program soon began to return as a contender in NHIAA DII soccer.

**"The legacy that I think of for Charlie is that he was able to fall, and then rather than accepting it and moving on, he dedicated himself to creating something that became bigger than just the wins and losses."**

"The legacy that I think of for Charlie is that he was able to fall, and then rather than accepting it and moving on, he dedicated himself to creating something that became bigger than just the wins and losses," said Bayer. "He did a great job of turning the program into more of a respected culture, where it was important that we succeeded on the field, but the real focus of his was not to win a state championship every year

but to create a championship caliber group of men."

Crull's primary goal was to build players' character, but at the same time he was re-building a dominant soccer program. Between 2011 and 2014 Crull's teams were able to advance one round further in the playoffs each year, from making the first round of the playoffs in 2011 to finishing as the state runner-up just three years later.

At this point in Crull's career, he was putting more time than ever into coaching, including running early morning workouts in the off-season where he was able to get more personal with his players and learn more about their lives off of the soccer field.

Jon Dutka ('15) was a goalkeeper under Crull for three seasons, captain on the state runner-up team in 2014, and a member of the 'workout crew' that Crull noted he had a strong bond with. "Charlie focused on developing good relationships with his players so that they would feel welcome and confident, and those workouts show Chuck's dedication to his team and the sport," said Dutka, who now plays for DIII Thomas College in Waterville, Maine. "I know that 'Chuck' has left a positive impact on numerous players over the years at Oyster River. He showed us all the level of work rate, and focus that is needed to be successful in any part of life."

Crull's dedication and passion for the team went far beyond just what his players saw. He spent countless hours developing a list of core principles for members of the program to abide by, creating thick packets with detailed information on the roles of any given position in





*Crull (left) and Bayer (right) look on from the sidelines in what would be Crull's last match coaching ORHS (Photo Credit: Kristen Carpenter)*

various formations that players were given before the season, planning training session plans from pre-season camps to winter futsal, and discussing various aspects of the game with other coaches. "I learned from Greg Tucker that you have to surround yourself with good people. I surrounded myself with him and many other great coaches," said Crull. "I learned enough to know that the program is about the players, and giving them accountability within it."

Greg Tucker, whom Crull refers to as one of his most helpful mentors, was an overseer and contributor to the program in the latter years of Crull's reign at Oyster River. Tucker's son, Colin ('18) was one of a small handful of players under Crull to play on varsity throughout each his four years of high school, and in doing so was able to get to know Crull better than most. "I think what made Charlie such a successful coach was his work ethic," said Colin Tucker. "It was very noticeable just how much time he spent preparing for everything." Crull was certainly one of the most influential figures in Tucker's soccer career, and the same can be said for Tucker's impact on Crull, as he slotted home the game-winner in the 2015 DII Championship game. Although Crull's first and only state championship was certainly his most recognizable accomplishment, for him it was just the icing on the cake of a season and an entire coaching journey full of smaller moments.

It was actually in the game prior, the semi-final, where Crull said

possibly his favorite moment within his coaching career came. Senior co-captain Mitchell Harling ('16) had been one of the team's strongest defenders through his three years on varsity, but after an injury forced another player into his old position, Crull moved Harling up to striker when he became healthy. In one of his only career games at forward, Harling scored the game-winner on a goal that seemed nearly impossible. "That was an 'aha' moment that I'll never forget," said Crull. "Those moments are the reasons why I coach."

"Charlie and I had developed a relationship built on trust and mutual interest and I'm thankful that he trusted me and put me in a position to succeed," said Harling. "Charlie is leaving a legacy of accountability. He taught us the importance of responsibility and that we should be proud when we have done well and put the onus on ourselves when we have done wrong."

Though Charlie Crull may have coached his last game for the Oyster River High School soccer program, the accomplishments he has been a part of on the field and the lessons he has taught off of it will forever be left with the players he coached. As the ORHS Boys' Soccer program moves on with a new head coach, with Bayer being a possible candidate for the position, Crull will continue teaching these lessons to another group of players as he coaches his son George's U6 team. **M**

203 Wins, 58 Losses, 15 Draws

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2013 NHIAA DII Coach of the Year

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2015 NHIAA DII State Champion

-Zach Leichtman

# Going Pro

“The feeling of flying through the air is unlike anything else, and landing a new trick that you’ve put your blood and sweat in to, is even better,” explains Hunter Henderson.

Henderson, a fifteen year-old from Madbury, New Hampshire, originally attended Oyster River Middle School, and spent the winter term at Waterville Valley Academy, in order to chase after his dreams



of being a professional freestyle skier. Now, Henderson is a student at the New Hampton School two thirds of the year, while the other third is spent skiing at WVA, along with other students in grades six through twelve, dedicated to skiing or snowboarding.

At only two years old, Henderson first set foot on the mountain, and from that moment on, he was hooked. Beginning on small jumps, he caught the tiniest bit of air, yet loved every second of it. A few years later, he joined the Sunday River Freestyle Team, an early step, which created key opportunities. As his passion quickly progressed, while watching a professional skiing competition, he realized what he wanted to pursue in years to come. Now he’s closer to that goal than ever before.

Freestyle skiing was brought into the Olympic games in 1988 as a demonstration sport. The event is broken up into two categories, slopestyle and halfpipe. Slopestyle’s course consists of rails, jibs, and an assortment of jumps. Meanwhile halfpipe is where big air tricks are performed, as well as flips and twists. Both are judged out of a total score of one hundred, based off difficulty, style, execution, and technique.

Last year, Henderson was the first American finisher at the qualifier and was invited to the Junior World Championship, located in Valmalenco, Italy. This competition included freestyle skiers age fourteen to eighteen years old, for the most elite group of teenage skiers. Henderson, at fourteen and one of the youngest skiers at the competition, placed thirty-ninth overall. “The amount of work my fellow teammates and I put into learning

new tricks and progressing is unbelievable which makes succeeding at competitions or in training the best feeling in the world,” explains Henderson.

“The competitions I will be competing at this season are the YS. Revolution Tours, the Nor-Am Canadian tours, the Aspen Open, and the US Nationals.” Henderson regularly competes with the top amateur skiers in the country, ranging in age from fourteen to twenty-five years old. “One thing I really like about competing and traveling is meeting new people who are just like me, who just love doing what they do,” says Henderson. With traveling,

Henderson has made friends from all over the country, yet he has also developed closer relationships with competitors, which he has competed with for several years.

“Competing at this level means that I don’t have much time to hang out with friends outside of the ski world. In turn, it has been hard to keep up with my friends, but I try to visit when I have off time,” says Henderson. He keeps up his school work during his winter term while skiing at Waterville Valley Academy on top of traveling and skiing, but his social life is a little more difficult.

“It was definitely hard sometimes, for example, when he went up to Waterville for the winter. It was hard to hang out with him. We could always keep in touch, but it was tough to see each other,” says Owen McKiernan, a close friend, who attends Phillips Exeter Academy. Henderson tries the best he can to maintain his friendships while he’s away skiing and at boarding school. “He sometimes tells funny stories about his friends from skiing, but besides that he’s humble and doesn’t gloat at all,” explains Charlie Rainer, another friend attending Governor’s Academy.

On top of being an athlete, Henderson shows compassion and an appreciation for his friends who have stuck by him for years. “He’s a funny guy who I can always count on to have a fun time with. He’s also a nice guy who you can always trust,” explains McKiernan.

*“The amount of work my fellow teammates and I put into learning new tricks and progressing is unbelievable which makes succeeding at competitions or in training the best feeling in the world.”  
- Hunter Henderson.*





While away at Waterville during the winter, he's not alone. Henderson is accompanied by his sister Grace. "I go to the full time program where there is only 30 kids.

We are like a big family. There are no groups of friends and the "popular" and "unpopular" which is something I really enjoy," explains Grace Henderson, also a former student at Oyster River. The siblings are able to spend time together during the winter season.

Outside of his busy life, Henderson is a supportive sibling. "I always love looking over at the top of a competition and seeing his smiling face cheering me on. We have always been there for each other and that is something I really appreciate, because that's not a relationship that all brother and sisters have

I'm glad to call him my best friend," says Grace. Having a close sibling bond, especially over the same sport, gives Grace and Hunter Henderson an extra boost of support for each other, and the two have been inseparable.

For the first time, both Hendersons will be competing at different events around the country at different times, which means their time together will be more limited. "I am definitely going to miss having him by my side. We will be going for long periods of time apart and I will miss him for sure," explains Grace. But she isn't the only family member encouraging the two sibling's enthusiasm for freestyle skiing.

"My parents have made all the difference for our skiing. They are so supportive with all the pain that comes with skiing and the expensive trips and schools that we go to, to help us live our dream," says Grace.

In December 2014, Henderson participated in a TEDxYouth talk, where he spoke in front of an audience about his elite skiing. For a few minutes he focused on discussing how much he appreciates the support his parents have given him throughout the years, especially during an extreme sport, which is potentially incredibly dangerous.

Henderson mentioned, "my mom says she's pretty terrified most of the time, but she knows that this is what makes me happy."

Henderson works hard every day in order to learn new tricks and continue to grow his career, while working to avoid injury during training for his extreme sport. "My team and I work out five days a week so that we can try to decrease the chances of injury. I'm always thinking about keeping myself safe and not pushing it too far while on the mountain," says Henderson.

His goal of being a professional skier may only be a few years away as he continues to train year-round, and traveling throughout the season for new competitions.

Competing at an elite level, where a simple flip no longer cuts it for Henderson, he is putting in the time he needs to go pro. "To reach this goal I'm going to keep competing and training with my team at Waterville and hopefully within the next few years I'll make it into the US rookie team, which will give me more exposure and hopefully will help me qualify for professional competitions." **M**



Photos by Dan Shuffleton

- Felicia Drysdale



# Baseball Finds Itself in

*In October of 1978, an average of over forty-four million viewers tuned in to watch the New York Yankees defeat the Los Angeles Dodgers in the World Series in six games. Thirty-six years later, in 2014, an average of less than fourteen million watched the San Francisco Giants beat the Kansas City Royals in that year's seven-game series (Baseball Almanac).*



Baseball's popularity, both in viewership and participation, has seen a great decline from decade to decade since its peak in the '70s and '80s, and many studies show that youth interest in the sport is getting even smaller. There are fingers pointing at many different factors that have played a role in the struggle that baseball finds itself in today, which include generational differences, other more attractive opportunities, and a lack of change in the sport itself. The sport now poorly represents its cheerful, once-true nickname of America's 'National Pastime.'

According to a study done by the National Sporting Goods Association and presented by the Wall Street Journal, titled "Losing Interest", youth participation in baseball was nearly halved within a decade and a half span from nearly nine million youths (age 7-17) playing the sport in 2000 yet only a tad over five million in 2014. Another study by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association, titled "Age 6-17 Participation Change by Sport," showed that baseball was the second-greatest declining sport in participation, just slightly behind track and field (however baseball is primarily a male-only sport while track and field deals with both genders).

"I think it says a lot about our changing culture that less kids play baseball growing up," notes Ben Isaac (ORHS '17), who is an infielder at Suffolk University in Boston. "Baseball used to be one of the only activities a kid could get involved in; nowadays kids have so many options that sports are less pushed."

The push to other activities or sports that Isaac describes can be clearly seen within the Oyster River community. Throughout Isaac's years of youth baseball, the Oyster River Youth Association's 'Majors' baseball league, comprised of fourth, fifth, and sixth graders, saw numbers regularly around seventy kids in the league. However, only thirty-two students played in the Oyster River High School program last season, including just six seniors in a class that had upwards of

twenty baseball players throughout middle school.

Former two-sport standout Greg Gilmore, who played baseball and soccer at Southern Vermont College, sees the rise in popularity and style of gameplay in other sports, like lacrosse, as the biggest detriment to baseball participation. "I think youth participation in baseball is declining because parents, and kids, are finding different opportunities," says Gilmore, who helped lead SVC baseball to two straight conference championships and now is the head coach of the school's soccer team. "Lacrosse is one of the fastest growing sports in America, and there's a lot more running, and even if you don't start, you can still play a lot. Baseball is structured very differently in terms of playing time, and I think it's causing more and more kids to turn to lacrosse and other sports."

Some, like ESPN's Sunday Night Baseball producer Andy Reichwald, believe that baseball's youth attraction issue is tied to the sport being lost in time. "The way baseball is played has not changed much in the last 100 years. The rules are basically the same," says Reichwald. "Baseball is not a game of constant action like basketball, by comparison. Instead, it is a game of sudden action surrounded by periods of what appears to some as inactivity."

Wake Forest baseball commit Brennen Oxford ('18) believes that baseball's decreasing popularity is a result of the mindset of millennials which wasn't as prevalent in the sport's heyday. "I think kids are against failing in this generation and baseball, being a game of failure, doesn't seem to attract the 'trophy generation' because it's a hard game to succeed in," he says.

Reichwald also agrees that part of the sport's identity crisis is in part due to millennials' mindset. "The flow of a baseball game may not necessarily appeal to 'iGen'ers'. They are used to a world of instant gratification where answers can be found immediately, where communication is delivered in short bursts via social media and where a

# a Pickle with Popularity

**“The flow of a baseball game may not necessarily appeal to ‘iGen’ers’. They are used to a world of instant gratification where answers can be found immediately, where communication is delivered in shorts bursts via social media and where a “conversation” might mean an exchange of texts or Snapchats.”**

**-ESPN Sunday Night Baseball Producer Andy Reichwald**

“conversation” might mean an exchange of texts or Snapchats.”

As Reichwald noted, another significant factor in a lack of interest in both watching and playing baseball is the pace of play. A study released by Microsoft in 2015 (and featured in TIME’s article You Now Have a Shorter Attention Span Than a Goldfish) reported that the average attention span of a person today is 33% less than that of a person in 2000, largely due to the introduction of social media and smartphones. More so now than ever, most youth don’t have the patience to participate in or watch an activity with little outward action that often takes upwards of three hours to complete. Because of this shorter attention span, many youth may have trouble picking up on the nuances of the game that those who love it cherish. “There’s really a game within a game that’s often hard to see,” adds Oxford. “There’s no random things going on. It’s all thought out, which is where I am able to stay into it.”

Gilmore agrees with the notion that baseball’s age-old slow speed is one of the factors impacting the popularity of the sport. “I think the sport has always been slow, and where other sports have found ways to adapt, baseball has not,” he explains. “There’s been an effort to speed up basketball games, and we’ve seen football scores go up with more and more passing. I’m not sure baseball has had any effective changes.”

Major League Baseball and its commissioner Rob Manfred are well aware of the issues that the pace-of-play in baseball have caused. The league has taken criticism over its inability to shorten game time, as in 2017 the average game, at 3 hours and 8 minutes, was actually longer than it had ever been in the history of the league. In the ‘60s and ‘70s, the average game time was around 2 hours and 30 minutes, but an increase in advertisements and commercials during broadcasts has led to this continuous increase. In hopes to make some progress in cutting down game-time, Manfred announced this year that the MLB will implement a ‘pitch clock’ in games starting in 2018. The 20 second-timed clock, similar to those seen in basketball, was tested around the minor

leagues since 2015, and although lightly enforced by umpires, proved effective enough to make its way to the majors. The objective of the clock is to force pitchers to throw pitches within a quicker pace than many usually do.

Manfred has also voiced his concern with the sport having difficulty attracting a younger audience. According to Baseball Almanac, the league’s median viewer age is an astounding 55 years old (and rising), nearly twenty years higher than that of the average NBA viewer. ESPN’s most recent annual ‘World Fame 100’ list, which quantifies the popularity of athletes in the world through social media, sponsorships, and other factors and then ranks the top 100, had no MLB players on it, but did feature a table tennis player and a badminton player.

In order for the sport to see any major increase in popularity, Reichwald believes the MLB should explore new ways of promoting their top players to the world. “Major League Baseball needs to do a better job in marketing its stars,” he says. “They have improved in this area in recent years, but there is room for more growth. Dynamic young players like Aaron Judge and Cody Bellinger or more established stars like Giancarlo Stanton and Jose Altuve need to be household names among not just baseball fans, but all sports fans. These are incredible athletes and their ability to hit a 96 mile-per-hour fastball over 400 feet takes incredible skill.”

From Little League to the Major Leagues, the issue that baseball faces in restoring its popularity and participation is one that it may not have enough control over to fix. Whether it be due to increasingly slower games, a younger generation that doesn’t have the attention span for it, an increase in other sports to choose from, or a combination of these factors, baseball is certainly no longer America’s ‘National Pastime’, and may continue to be a pastime for fewer and fewer Americans if things continue in the way they appear to be going. **M**

**“I think the sport has always been slow, and where other sports have found ways to adapt, baseball has not. There’s been an effort to speed up basketball games, and we’ve seen football scores go up with more and more passing. I’m not sure baseball has had any effective changes.”**

**-Former College Baseball Star Greg Gilmore**

-Zach Leichtman

# Too Young To Specialize?

“For part of elementary school my gymnastics coach lived at my house. He would bring me to practice in the morning then bring me to school and then we’d go right back to practice after school,” says Julianna Caldicott (‘19).

Caldicott was only three when she was picked out for the “team track,” a path that would lead her towards a future in the Olympics. Being noticed and starting training at such a young age is not uncommon for stand out athletes. As the intensity builds, and they notice the sacrifices they’re making, they ask themselves, “is this worth it?”

Specialized athletes note that the relationships they’ve built through their sports are unlike any other. “It was fun to be at the gym because my team and I were in it together. We’d been traveling and practicing all the time together, so they were my best friends since I was just five years old, and my coaches were like second parents to me,” says Caldicott.

Henderson has the opportunity to travel all year long as a member of the US ski team. Her best friend lives in Vermont and her other good friends live in Utah, and they all have come together through skiing. Henderson says, “I also have friends from California, Idaho, Michigan, Maine, and Colorado. I would have never made those connections without skiing which is pretty cool.” Now that she is working her way to a professional level, she even has friends that are Olympic medalists from

Switzerland, Canada, Sweden, and Estonia.

This past spring, Henderson tore her ACL on the same day and the same course as Joss Christensen, freestyle skier and olympic gold medalist at the Sochi Olympics in 2014. Through this connection they became really good friends and still stay in touch with each other to this day.

This brings up the serious risk of injury that specialized athletes have. Physical therapist, Colleen Yoder, explains that, “athletes doing a lot of one sport are more prone to injury because they’re doing the same movements repeatedly. With gymnasts you get the fractures because of the impact, impact, and more impact. If kids specialize too early, they’re 50% more prone to injuries than if you’re well rounded, doing multiple sports, and using different parts of your body.”

Caldicott is an example of a specialized athlete who suffers from overuse injuries. Her hips became uneven at a young age, and by age nine she was regularly seeing a physical therapist and a chiropractor. By age ten she was taping both her ankles after suffering breaks in both of them, wearing a back brace for fractures that will never heal, and getting x-rays what felt like constantly.

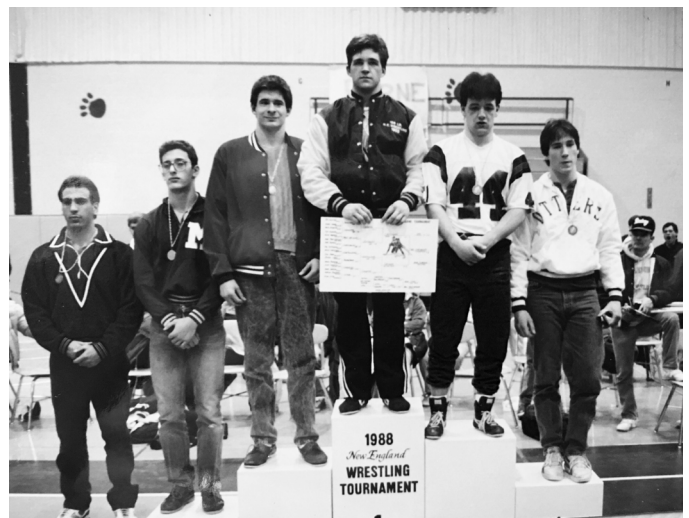
“I ended up stopping because I was in so much pain, and I wasn’t progressing because of my fracture. It wasn’t worth it,” Caldicott says.

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## *A Day in the Life*



**Julianna Caldicott** (‘19) started gymnastics at two and a half and started competing at age six. By that point she was already practicing up to three times a week for three hours at a time. The following summer she also started attending gymnastics sleepaway camp where she was tested on the number of push ups she could do, how fast she could climb the rope, and how flexible she was. The intensity continued to build, and in third through eighth grade she had practice five days a week, 4:30 to 9:00 each night. Caldicott says it was “really hard and so tiring. We would practice Wednesdays before school too and be late to school. We’d be doing homework at the gym. Weekends were meets where we’d travel to cities like Baltimore or Chicago.” Her life outside of the gym was “pretty much non existent,” she adds. She doesn’t compete anymore but her friends that do are homeschooled because there just isn’t enough time in the day to go to school and train the amount they do.



**Ted Castonguay** wrestled Division I at University of New Hampshire and was 1988’s New England champion for high schoolers under 189 pounds. He started competing in ninth grade but in first grade he could already tell he was good in combative type environments. “I knew I was good at it, but I didn’t have an outlet. My town didn’t have a junior wrestling team so I had to wait for high school,” says Castonguay. As a ninth grader, Castonguay remembers endless amounts of pushups, situps, and running. Practice was for two and a half hours a day but Castonguay would go to practice early and leave late. The goal was to gain as much muscle as possible with the least fat, and be the biggest in the smallest weight class. This meant only eating the best food for his body, and also required him to cut weight every week.



Castonguay also felt that wrestling at the level he did wasn't worth it. "Division I wrestling was god awful. You push yourself so much that you get injured, and the cycle of cutting weight every week was a disaster. I wouldn't feel normal for the next three days," he says. His natural body weight with no fat was 210 pounds and he had to get down to 196 to meet his weight class. Castonguay stopped eating and drinking on Wednesday night until he got on the scale at 5 pm on Friday. "My skin would be tight because I was so dehydrated. As soon as I got off the scale I started drinking water, gatorade, and then the team would destroy the dining hall and go to bed with a full, bloated stomachs the night before meets," he says.

Caldicott also feels as though she missed simple things like the opportunity to join ski club, and she spent the whole summer in the gym.

Despite this, these athletes have learned from their experiences. Henderson has learned to be independent. She cooks, does laundry, and gets on airplanes by herself.

Caldicott learned how many times you need to fail before you succeed. "At the age of six I had to stand up by myself on a four inch beam and do my routine in front of hundreds of people. It was really hard when you'd practice for hundreds and hundreds of hours then you get up on the beam for competition and you fall off. You want to just lay on the ground and cry but you have to collect yourself and get back up there," she says.

Castonguay developed the attitude at a young age that if you want results you need to focus on what you can control. "I noticed that setting goals, making myself uncomfortable, and putting myself in a position where I had to learn put me at a whole different level," he says.

Even though Caldicott is not planning on competing at that level again, she thinks it will always be a part of her life. She now coaches younger kids and says, "I never want to lose my splits."

Despite the injuries and struggles specialized athletes face, the opportunities they've been given are irreplaceable. Castonguay says, "life is a trade off. Whatever you miss out on, hopefully you're making up for it with that sport." **M**




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## *A Day in the Life*



**For Grace Henderson** ('19), who placed fifth from the US at the World Cup, her whole life revolves around skiing. She started skiing at the age of two and now trains five to six hours a day throughout the winter. "I've given up a normal high school experience to be at a school (Waterville Valley Academy) with forty kids. All my time is training," says Henderson.



**Brennen Oxford** ('18) started playing baseball at five years old and is committed to play for Wake Forest. Baseball is traditionally a spring sport but Oxford trains year round. The fall has the most intense workouts which last three to four hours a day. Each pitcher has a pitching count, or "number of pitches that would be unhealthy to go over depending on the day," says Oxford. Oxford tries to stay under 100 to avoid injuries.

-Phoebe Lovejoy

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